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WIDENER



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THE RICHER
LIFE
WALTER A.
DYER

An ornate, symmetrical decorative frame in gold. It features intricate scrollwork, floral motifs, and a central crest-like element at the bottom. The frame encloses the author's name and is positioned below the title.

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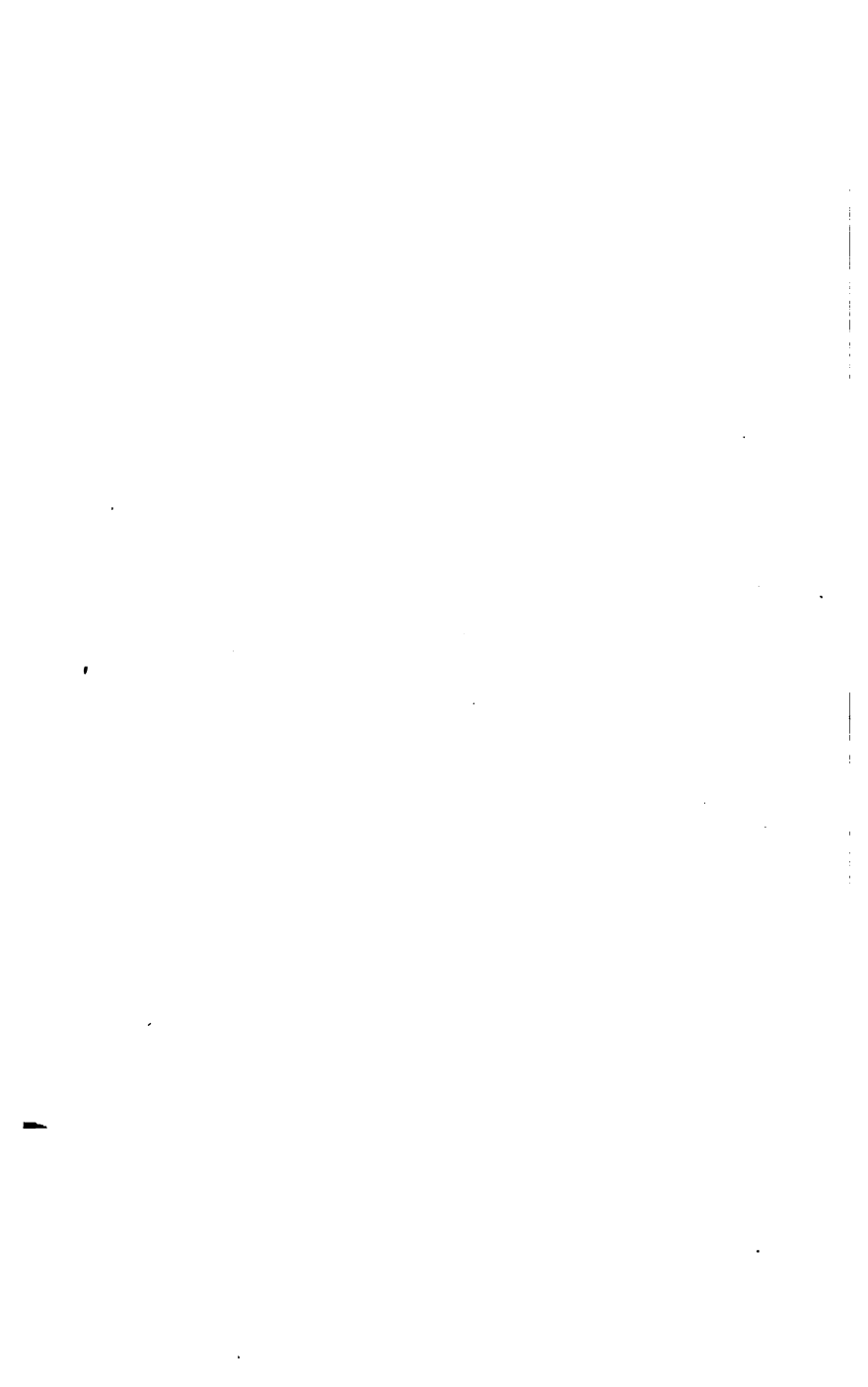


Harvard College Library

FROM

Mrs. A. S. Williams





THE RICHER LIFE





6

THE RICHER LIFE

BY

WALTER A. DYER

GARDEN CITY, NEW YORK
DOUBLEDAY, PAGE & COMPANY
1911

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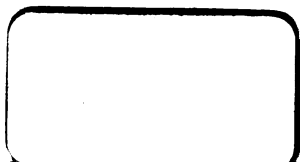
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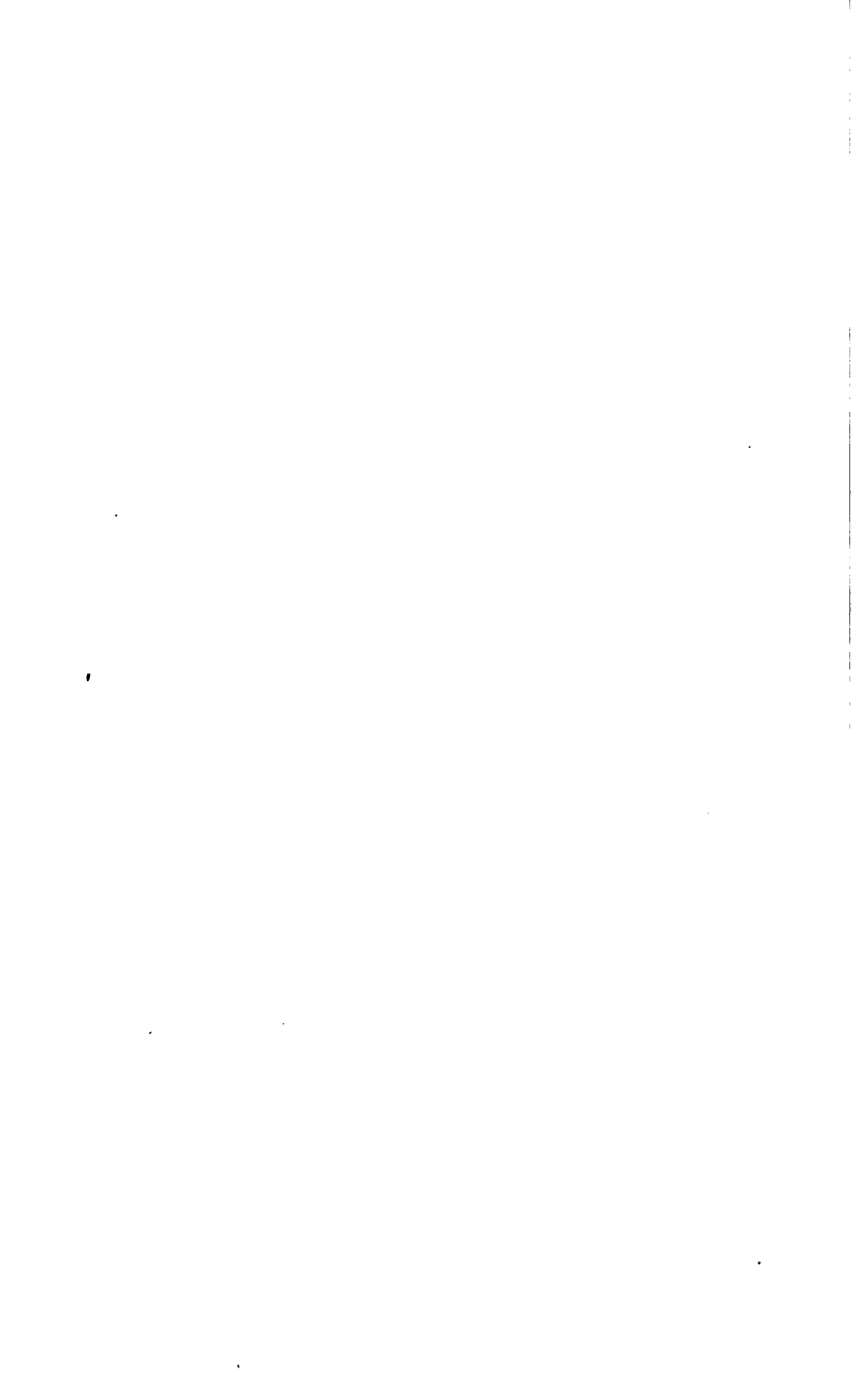


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THE RICHER LIFE

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THE RICHER LIFE

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THE RICHER LIFE

immigrant, of the poor, and we endeavour to solve their problems *en masse*, by formulating a remedy for the ills of a group. The needs of the individual are lost sight of in contemplating the needs of society. The personal, individual, human soul is starved while we consider the great problems of mankind. I do not find fault with the preachers and teachers and leaders who take this grand, broad view of things. We need them sorely — we need more of them. But I have been straining my ears in vain to catch the voice of one crying in the wilderness, “Make peace with thine own soul.” For, after all, we are individuals, you and I. We may be a part of this movement or that class, and as such we share the common problems of humanity; but individuals we remain to the end of the chapter.

A LAY PREACHMENT

You may call this view a selfish one, but I maintain that we are by nature selfish. The struggle for existence is selfish. The instinct of self-preservation is selfish. We can't get away from the personal factor. I am more important to myself than all the heathen in the world. If I have a toothache, my interest in child labour in Pennsylvania wanes. I cannot help it; I was born that way. So were you; and you will admit it, if you are honest. And the best form of unselfishness that I know of lies not in sacrifice to some great cause, but in making the troubles of other individuals your own. That is the only way you, an individual, can really understand them.

So, while I would sympathize to the fullest extent with the great leaders of human progress, I, if I were a

THE RICHER LIFE

preacher, would seek to influence individual consciences and to awaken individual souls.

I attended a dinner, not long since, and listened to ringing speeches from four great leaders of men — Bishop Williams of Michigan, Francis J. Heney of San Francisco, Champ Clark of Missouri, and Theodore Roosevelt of Oyster Bay. Each preached his own gospel in his own way, but each preached of the national life, of righteousness in politics and business, of the soul of ninety-odd millions. They were thrilling, inspiring speeches, but not one of them struck home to me and my little household on Long Island. And I thought that perhaps there might be something that they, with all their loftiness and breadth of view, were overlooking.

While we are reforming great masses

A LAY PREACHMENT

of men, why can we not perhaps take a little thought on self-reform? If I do not go to the dogs, and if you do not go to the dogs, and if we two help to keep our neighbour from going to the dogs, and if some millions of other people could be induced to make the same effort, I have a feeling that perhaps the country wouldn't go to the dogs.

And I, if I were a preacher, would preach the gospel of the quiet life. Matthew Arnold had something to say once about sweetness and light that made somewhat of an impression on men, I believe. Aren't we neglecting to meditate on the beauty and usefulness of sweetness and light? Bishop Williams said that our Americanism was Hebraic. It is. We worship a mighty Jehovah, not a kindly Christ. Our national life is the apotheosis of storm and

THE RICHER LIFE

stress, and he is the greatest reformer whose voice is loud enough to be heard above the tumult, and whose arm is strong enough to beat down other strong arms. It is inspiring. War is always inspiring. But here and there, I fancy, a weary heart is saying, "Let us have peace."

This is my apology for not preaching national reform and the strenuous life. For, if I were a preacher, I would doubtless neglect these great duties, and preach to the heart of my neighbour, if so I might bring some peace and joy and soul awakening into his life. For I can love a man; I find it hard to love a race.

If I were a preacher! I have sometimes sat in a church and wondered if the preacher in the pulpit knew what he was preaching and why. I have wondered if he had any con-

A LAY PREACHMENT

ception of the character and needs of the individual souls before him. I have wondered if it could ever occur to him how little I cared for his expounding of doctrines and texts.

Sometimes I have been a little hard on the preachers. I have scorned their cloistered lives and closed my ears to their ineffectual logic; but I was wrong. I asked a ministerial friend quite frankly, one day, why he did not preach better sermons, for I knew that he was a thoughtful man and did not lack knowledge or purpose.

"You people who write," said he, "can take a month or a year to crystallize your thoughts. You can take the time to wait for inspiration. If a writer like Emerson should produce a dozen great essays in a lifetime, he would have done

THE RICHER LIFE

a man's work. But we preachers cannot wait for inspiration. We must prepare one, two, or even three sermons each week, no matter what state of mental depression we may be in. And the average pastor has enough things in his work to cause mental depression. It is only the genius like Beecher who leads a life of continuous inspiration. We cannot all be Beechers."

I was silenced, I must admit, for I caught a glimpse of a preacher's soul. And very likely, if I were a preacher, I would find myself worse than the poorest of them. Meanwhile, however, when the sermon is dull and my mind goes wandering, I continue to fancy what I would preach if I were a preacher.

I would preach a little less theology and more philosophy, I think —

A LAY PREACHMENT

less scripture and more ethics. And I believe I would be right in this. Christ's miracles were of secondary importance. His real influence was in His teachings, and those are personal and ethical.

If I were a preacher, I would study the Sermon on the Mount, in season and out of season. I would preach a sermon on charity, and a sermon on love, and a sermon on gentleness, and a sermon on kindness, and a sermon on courtesy, and a sermon on generosity, and a sermon on square dealing. I would try to understand the lives and hearts of those before me, and minister to them in a personal, practical way. I would try to preach something on Sunday that would help to sweeten Monday.

Above all, I would preach the gospel of the richer life. I would try to

THE RICHER LIFE

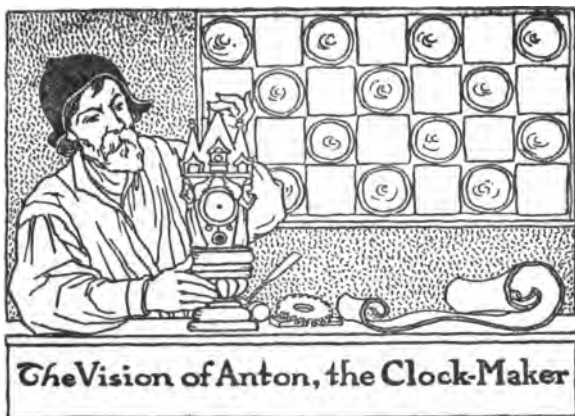
teach my congregation to feed their souls. I would try to lead their thoughts away from material things to the life of the spirit within them. I would try to show them the incalculable value of their own souls to themselves. I would try to point out definite, practical, reasonable ways in which they might become happier in spite of circumstances; calmer, braver, less easily disturbed by those things which can harm only the bodily comfort, not the immortal soul.

If I were a preacher —

But since I am not, I must needs think the thoughts of a layman. And because I find that others, here and there, are thinking along these same lines, I have ventured to write down some of these thoughts, as well as I can, in the hope that what I have to say may serve to set going

A LAY PREACHMENT

in others mental processes that will result in turning the attention to the things of the spirit and the consequent enrichment of life.



nce upon a time there lived a near-sighted and obscure clock-maker in an ancient town in Flanders. It was in fourteen hundred and something, at about the time when new continents were being discovered, and old continents were being ransacked for whatever might serve to enrich the life of Europe. We call it the period of the Renaissance, and this is the story of the renaissance

THE VISION OF ANTON

of Anton, the Flemish clock-maker.

Anton was apprentice to an old craftsman who made clocks to help very rich people to know the time of day. No one but the rich could afford to buy clocks in those days, so the old clock-maker needed but one assistant. They were crude clocks with but one hand, but they served the purpose. Anton, however, had a soul in his body, and he became very tired of bending eternally over his work bench, making one-handed clocks for people he didn't know. His was a restless sort of soul, but a starved one, and it didn't know how to show Anton the way to better things.

So Anton decided to find out for himself. As he went about the streets of a Sunday he heard of the good gray monks that lived beyond

THE RICHER LIFE

the hill. He was told that they were wise and kind, and that they made sure their entrance into Heaven by many prayers and much fasting. They were so good that they had time enough left from their prayers to engage in scholarly pursuits. In short, they lived an ideal kind of existence and one that Anton thought would satisfy the cravings of his soul.

So one day Anton left the old clock-maker and journeyed over the hill to the monastery of the good gray monks. They took him in as a lay brother and set him to weeding the garden; but soon they learned that he was skilled with tools, and they gave him the task of building the new altar in the chapel.

When the altar was nearly finished, the abbot of the monastery came to Anton and said: "My son, I perceive

THE VISION OF ANTON

that thou hast much cunning. Canst thou carve a legend for the front of the altar?"

"I can, Father," said Anton.

So the abbot sought for a legend that would fit the space on the front of the altar, and after much searching he brought to Anton this:

"Where there is no Vision, the people perish."

Anton accordingly selected a piece of hard, close-grained oak, and began to carve the legend. Now Anton possessed enough of the craftsman's soul to make him strive to carve the legend well, and he spent many days and took infinite pains. And as he worked he said the words over and over to himself:

"Where there is no Vision, the people perish."

He found himself wondering what these words meant, and as he carved

THE RICHER LIFE

his perplexity grew upon him. At last he could contain himself no longer, and he went to the abbot. "Holy Father," said he, "I am much troubled to know the meaning of the words thou hast given me to carve."

Now the abbot had selected the legend without great thought. It sounded well, and it was the right length. So he made answer lightly. "Those, my son, are the words of a Wise Man of old. They refer to that divine guidance which saves men's souls, and which comes only through prayer and fasting."

But Anton had prayed and fasted, and no Vision had come to him. He asked his brother monks to explain the words to him, but they could not satisfy him, and Anton nearly went mad in the endeavour to understand.

THE VISION OF ANTON

When the carving was complete and the altar finished, Anton found no more work that interested him. He looked about him, and saw the monks feasting and fasting, praying and working, but he could not discover to what purpose.

“If it be true that without a Vision the people perish,” he said to himself, “shall we not all perish? Not even the good gray monks have a Vision. They know not what a Vision is.”

So gradually he became dissatisfied with the monotonous life of the good gray monks, and their tiresome prayers and fastings to save their souls, until at last he could stand it no longer, and, never having taken the vows, he left the monastery. It was then that he bethought himself of the old clock-maker for whom he had worked in the town. He

THE RICHER LIFE

remembered how wise he was, and he sought the familiar shop. The old clock-maker was glad of the return of so good a workman, and received him joyfully. Then Anton told his story — how he had longed for something to satisfy his soul, how he had failed to find it even among the good gray monks, and how the words of the legend had perplexed him.

Then spake the wise old clock-maker. “A Vision,” quoth he, “is something good and lofty and desirable which the soul may see, and having not, may reach forth to obtain. Without a Vision the body may live, but the soul is starved. It is death in life. Men may eat, and drink, and sleep, and laugh, and work, and quarrel, and beget children, and die, but all to no purpose. They might as well die in the first place, and so

THE VISION OF ANTON

the Wise Man saith, 'Without a Vision, the people perish.'"

"And what may I do to get a Vision, that I may live?" asked Anton.

"He that seeketh, findeth," replied the clock-maker.

"Where shall I seek?" asked Anton.

"At thine own work bench," was the answer. "Thou hast been to the monastery of the good gray monks and found no Vision there. Thou may'st travel the world over, and no Vision will reward thy search. Look within thy heart, Anton, even into its hidden corners. Whatsoever thou findest that is good and worthy, examine it. Thus wilt thou find thy Vision. Do thy daily work, Anton, and let thy Vision find thee working. Then shalt thou be ready to receive it, and the meaning of thy life and work will be made clear to thee."

THE RICHER LIFE

Anton marvelled at the words of the wise old man, and pondered them in his heart as he went back to work at his bench. And every day he talked with the old clock-maker, and strove to learn, until at last the light broke in upon him, and he understood. For the meaning of the legend appears only through much thought and self-examination.

A day came when the old clock-maker arose no more from his bed, and Anton took his place as master of the shop.

“Now,” he said, “I will see if I can find a way to work with a Vision, for I know it is better than to work without one.”

Every Sunday he went through the market place and talked with his fellow-townsmen. He found that there were many things good and lofty and desirable that were lacking

THE VISION OF ANTON

in their lives, but he could discover no way to supply them. His soul was reaching forth, but it had not yet laid hold on a Vision.

One day in his shop, however, a Vision came to him. It was a little Vision, to be sure, but it was a beginning.

“I cannot give bread to all the poor, or bring happiness to the miserable,” he said. “I know only how to make clocks. So I will make a clock for the people, that they may have what only the rich may buy.”

So he set to work and built a huge clock, with two hands, like one he had seen that came from the South. Its face was two cubits across, and it was fashioned to run in all weathers. Beneath the face he carved and painted a legend:

“Where there is no Vision, the people perish.”

THE RICHER LIFE

In twelve months the clock was done, and he received permission to place it on the tower in the market place, where all men might see it and read the time of day. Many came and saw, and learned to tell the time from the figures on the dial, and the clock became famous throughout Flanders.

But there were many in the countryside who seldom came to the town, and so never were benefited by the clock, and it occurred to Anton one day that the reason for this was that the roads were so poor. He was now a man of substance and influence in the town, so he went to the burgomaster and told him that he would like to build better roads for the country people to use in coming to town. It took him a long time to make the fat burgomaster see this Vision, but at last

THE VISION OF ANTON

he succeeded, and the upshot of the matter was that in a few years there were fine, smooth roads running in all directions.

Anton's fame spread throughout Flanders, and to make a long story short, the king at last sent for him and made him a counsellor at the royal palace. This gave him a chance to broaden his Vision. He saw a greater and a happier Flanders, with the people prosperous in trade and industry and art, and when he died, full of years and honour, he left Flanders a better place because of his Vision. Anton the clock-maker was one who did not live in vain.

BECAUSE we are men and not beasts of the field we all have a desire within us, however small and ill-nourished, not to live in vain. That is

THE RICHER LIFE

the germ of a Vision, and it is for us to say whether or not we shall give heed to it and live by it. We may be automata, in some respects, but we have at least this birthright to do with as we choose. If we are thoughtful persons, we are asking ourselves how we can make our lives worth living. That is, after all, the great motive underlying human history and individual endeavour. I submit that the way so to live is to formulate and cultivate a Vision. That we are alive and needs must labour to live is a fact so commonplace as almost to escape notice. That our living and working may be in vain is a thought that troubles us when we take time to look eternal verities in the face. And we must take the time; else we are beasts of the field, for they, too, live and labour to live.

THE VISION OF ANTON

To us alone of all creatures is given the power to enrich our lives by taking thought of the spiritual side, for it is the spiritual in us that makes us men and not beasts. If we neglect the spiritual, we take a step backward toward the monkey and the amoeba; if we cultivate it, we press on toward our divine goal, and open up for ourselves wide vistas of a richer and altogether more desirable life. To realize this is to prepare the way for the definite Vision.

Many men seem to be living and working without any Vision. Or, if it may be called a Vision, it is a mean and sordid one. This is one of our American faults. Sometimes we Americans wonder what it is that makes life in the Old World seem mellower and richer. Some of us have stopped work long enough

THE RICHER LIFE

to take a breath and look about us, and we find ourselves wondering what it was that made the Elizabethan period in England a golden age. Let us just consider those Elizabethans for a moment. They seem to have prospered as well as we, and yet they managed to get their noses away from the grindstone, somehow. They found time to live a spacious and varied life. They planted England's finest gardens, built her most luxurious manor-houses, wrote her greatest poems and plays, fought great battles on the seas, set out for adventures in the New World — in short, they made their lives worth living, and when they were gone the world found that they had not lived in vain. We are accustomed to think of them as light-hearted pleasure-seekers, but they could not have

THE VISION OF ANTON

thus lived and produced results without a Vision.

There once lived a group of later Elizabethans in this country. They were country gentlemen, soldiers, scholars, lawyers, financiers, architects, travellers, men of affairs and culture. They, too, had a Vision, and lived not in vain. Washington, Franklin, Hamilton, Jefferson — did they not live the richer life? Were they content to be clock-makers or monks? Rest for a moment from that pressing business of yours and think of it. Did they lack anything that you stand any chance of getting? And did they not have vastly more?

As a people we have had a sort of Vision — a commercial Vision — and we have made the world to stand in wonder because of it. Our material progress has been indeed

THE RICHER LIFE

phenomenal. But our Vision has been a narrow and restricted one. It has not enriched our lives as it should have done. Something is the matter with it.

As individuals we are prone to err in the same direction. Either as clock-makers or as monks we bind ourselves to our little tread-mill, and we get nowhere. Only by giving our souls a chance can we find the richer life. Without a Vision we only half live.

Now a Vision does not necessarily mean a wholly altruistic ideal. You and I have our own lives to live, though we realize the importance of living for others as well. Nor are we bound to live for posterity alone. We must take our own lives, as they are, and give them some guiding Vision to make them worth while to ourselves, and through

THE VISION OF ANTON

ourselves, to others. We must make ourselves bigger, for little men can do little good.

To take examples that loom large enough to be seen of men, we have all known presidents of the United States who have had no Vision. They may have been honest and patient and wise. They may have discharged the duties of the day ably and conscientiously. But when they passed from office they left small impress. The other sort is too easily recognized to need naming — men who have seen the Vision of a young country growing from helpless infancy to lusty strength, or a sundered country knit together by unbreakable ties, or a too complacent country awakened to insidious dangers within it and the dire needs of posterity. It is easy to pick out

THE RICHER LIFE

the men of Vision from those of no Vision.

Now there is a wide difference between Dreams and a Vision, though they are related. Both are dependent upon that attribute of the human mind which we know by the name of imagination. Imagination is a gift without price. The beasts of the field have no imagination; the Man with the Hoe has little; the great men of all ages, from Abraham down, have been men of vigorous imagination. Imagination has been a mighty force in the development of the human race. Jerusalem and Rome were imagined before they were built. Without imagination there can be no upward striving.

In some people imagination takes the form of Dreams, and Dreams are but the fluttering of the imagina-

THE VISION OF ANTON

tion. A Dream makes no far and lofty flight. It vanishes before it is captured. It is the aimless wandering of the spirit. Some poetry has been built on Dreams, but little else.

Now a Vision — a creative Vision — is a pictured goal. There is purpose and vigour in it. It is productive of results. And the loftier the Vision, the higher the attainment.

Some of us have to fight against this wasting of the imaginative force in fruitless dreaming. Dreaming is natural in childhood, while the will is yet in a plastic state. Dreaming of the past is an old man's pleasure. But for the young and virile, there should be a Vision and not Dreams. And if we find we have formed the dreaming habit, we have simply got to learn to harness our Dreams and make a Vision of them. For

THE RICHER LIFE

a Vision is necessary to the highest achievement.

But the stronger contrast appears between the man of Vision and the man of no Vision. It is my contention that a man of no Vision is of little more use in the world than a horse, or at best, a good dog; and I believe that if we discover our lack of a Vision in time, we can create, or formulate, or cultivate one. And this we must do if we want the richer life.

Now we must bring this thought home, if it is to amount to anything. I can but suggest the thought; you must carry it through and apply it to your own needs and circumstances. I believe that each of us can broaden and elevate and enrich his individual life by strengthening whatever Vision he may have, and living with it. It may be only a little

THE VISION OF ANTON

Vision, but it will be a beginning. "Eat, drink, and be merry" is the slogan of the man of no Vision; so is "Work, for the night cometh," unless we have a clearly defined idea of what we are working for. Thoughtlessness and labour bondage are both doors that close out the Vision.

If you are a poet or a preacher, a duke or a doctor, or just a plain, everyday family man or housewife, you have opportunity enough to glorify the day's work by adding unto it a Vision. Then you will try to do good instead of merely maintaining a pastorate; you will deliver a message to the world instead of merely acquiring poetic laurels; you will save lives instead of merely building up a practice; you will make a home happier instead of merely paying off a mort-

THE RICHER LIFE

gage. This is what I mean by working with and living by a Vision. Thus only may you grow and enrich your life and that of many about you. "Where there is no Vision, the people perish."

When the Vision faded, Rome and Jerusalem passed away.

I shall never forget a picture once drawn for a class of students by a keen-minded professor of biology. He was trying to explain certain processes of evolution to a group of sophomores whose thoughts were mostly out on the ball field. He showed how one creature, back in the early ages, was thrown up on land and was forced either to grow legs or perish. And when the legs weren't sufficient for all of his descendants, some of them grew claws and teeth as well. Another creature developed the ability to fly

THE VISION OF ANTON

from pursuit, and another preferred quiet, stalking habits and a venomous fang. So, different types were developed, as different needs arose, until one creature was at last forced to stand upright and gain greater brain activity and skill with the hands in order to exist amid stronger and swifter adversaries.

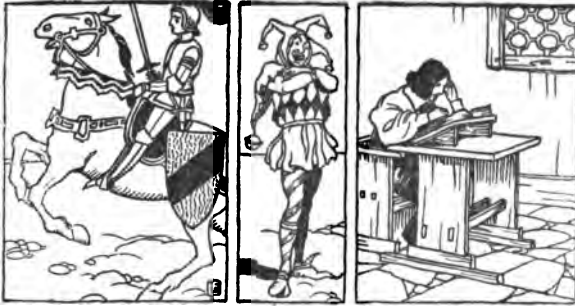
But away back near the beginning there was a creature that soon found a safe and easy haven. He grew a hard shell that was proof against all his enemies; he increased the functions of mouth and stomach to absorb food from the water about him; he had no need to run from pursuers, nor to go forth in search of food; he toiled not, neither did he fight. He has lived thus for countless ages, in the soft, luxurious mud, safe, well nourished, contented. He long ago reached a state of per-

THE RICHER LIFE

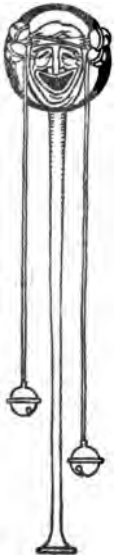
fect economic balance. What could be more desirable? Have we not many of us longed for a state like this?

“But,” cried the professor, leaning far over his desk, and shaking a long, warning finger at us, “who wants to be an oyster?”

And the oyster, I think you will agree, is primarily a creature without a Vision.



The Hermit, The Knight and The Jester
A STUDY IN VALUES



ONCE upon a time there was a nobleman who had three sons, and when he felt the burden of years resting heavy upon him, he called them to him and said: "My sons, the time has come when you must go forth to seek your fortunes in the world, for I must soon leave it. I have but a small estate to divide among three, but there is enough so that each of you may start out with a coat on his back

THE RICHER LIFE

and silver in his purse. Each of you may choose his own course, but it will remain for you to prove yourselves worthy of the honourable name that is handed down to you. I have endeavoured to teach you wisdom, virtue, and prudence, but it will remain for you to decide how you will follow my teachings. For a young man's life is in his own keeping after he comes of age, and the privilege and the responsibility of choosing a career rest with him. Take time to think it over, my sons, and then come to me for my blessing."

Now the eldest son was a man of keen intellect and great virtue. He saw all about him men striving and dying for wealth and fame. He had read much of what the ancient sages had taught of the vanity of the world.

HERMIT, KNIGHT AND JESTER

So at length he went to his father and said:

“Father, I have chosen my course. I have determined to become a scholar. I like not the world and its vanities; I like not the senseless struggling of men for power; I will withdraw from it and devote my life to the culture of my mind, but I will not be selfish; when I have looked long into the hidden things of life I will become wise, and then I will give to the world of my wisdom as did the philosophers of old. I will be a good man as well as a wise one. I will live frugally and think loftily. By dwelling in the realm of the ideal I will make myself a great teacher for mankind.”

The father nodded. “Thou art a good son,” quoth he. “May what thou seekest come to pass. My blessing go with thee.”

THE RICHER LIFE

So the eldest son took his share of the silver and his books, and departed.

The second son was a man of vigour and ambition. He looked about him and saw that some men were great and some small, some rich and some poor, some surrounded with comfort and some with misery, some powerful and some puny, some masters and some servants. Why should a man choose poverty, obscurity, and servitude, if wealth and fame and power were to be won? So he went to his father and said:

“Father, I have chosen my course. I have decided to be a soldier. I have a strong arm and I fear nothing. I will fight my way to fame and power. The king shall hear of me, and I shall be raised up so that thou shalt be proud of thy son.

HERMIT, KNIGHT AND JESTER

And when I am a master of men I will not be cruel, but all men shall look up to me, and I shall be honoured in the land."

The father nodded. "Thou art a brave son," quoth he. "May what thou seekest come to pass. My blessing go with thee."

So the second son took his share of the silver and bought a coat of mail, a lance, a sword, a plumed helmet, and a coal-black charger, and set off for the wars.

But the youngest son was a gentle youth who loved life as he found it. He hated not the world, nor did he long for power. He would rather laugh than sigh, rather sing than fight. For all that, he was no weakling, and he desired earnestly that his lifemight be worth the living. For many days he pondered, and then he went to his father and said:

THE RICHER LIFE

“Father, I cannot choose my course. I am neither a scholar nor a fighter like my brothers. I wish to lead a worthy life and make the world a little better, but I know not how to begin. The king has sent for me to be his jester, because he has heard that I have a ready wit, but a jester is not a man of honour among his brethren. He makes no stir in the world. What shall I do?”

Now the youngest son had his mother's eyes, and his father loved him best of the three. The father gazed at him fondly for a long time, and then said:

“My son, much reading of books may not make a wise man, and much spilling of blood may not make him great. Whatsoever a man's heart biddeth, so is he, whether he wear corselet, gown, or

HERMIT, KNIGHT AND JESTER

motley. Life is a various compound, and the wise man considereth not one ingredient alone. It matters not what garb or what trade a man chooseth, so that he choose also righteousness, honesty, kindness, open-heartedness, simplicity, tolerance, a clean mind, a sweet spirit, a lofty vision, and good will toward men. Go to the king and be his jester; it cannot hurt thee while thy soul is in thine own keeping. For it is the life of the soul, not the deeds of the mind or of the arm, that counts. My blessing go with thee."

So the third son set forth, very humbly, for the palace of the king; and his father watching him depart rejoiced, for humility is the beginning of greatness.

When twenty years had passed, and the old nobleman slept with his

THE RICHER LIFE

fathers, a traveller from a distant land passed by a hermit's cave in the mountains. He saw the scholar within poring over his books, and being a student of men the traveller made inquiry as to what manner of man the hermit was. He found that the hermit had gained renown throughout the land as a man of learning, but that no one loved him. Much brooding had made him morose. Much solitude had given him but little understanding of his fellow-men, and they could not understand him. When he tried to teach the people philosophy, he failed. "He is a dreamer," they said.

"A wasted life," quoth the traveller, and passed on.

One day he came to a town where there was a sound of tramping horses and presently, with much pomp, a

HERMIT, KNIGHT AND JESTER

troop of men-at-arms rode by, and all the people stood and gaped after them. At their head rode a knight of forbidding visage, on a coal-black charger.

“Who is that?” inquired the traveller. They told him that the knight was a mighty soldier, who had come back from the wars with much wealth and great renown. But the people did not love him, and when he gave alms he bestowed also fear. Much fighting had hardened his heart. He had climbed to power on the necks of friend and foe. His career had left him no time for the finer things of life.

“A fool for all his greatness,” quoth the traveller, and passed on.

At length he came to the city where the king’s palace was. And as he paused before the inn, a jester passed in his silly cap and bells. With the

THE RICHER LIFE

jester were children, begging for a story, and he rebuked them not. An old woman stepped out quickly from a doorway and kissed the jester's hand before he could protest. And as he passed, the people smiled, and there was love and not mockery in the smile.

"Who is that fellow?" asked the traveller.

"That," replied the innkeeper, "is the court fool."

"But do the people love a fool?" inquired the traveller.

"Yea, verily," quoth the publican, and told the traveller many a tale of the king's jester, before the tavern door.

It appeared that the jester, when he was not busy making laughter for the king and his court, had taken to wandering about the town and making laughter for the people.

HERMIT, KNIGHT AND JESTER

Now laughter is not a thing to be disregarded, and the people came to look for the jester with joy. And soon they learned that beneath his wit lay a fund of homely wisdom, and that beneath his motley beat a Christian heart. And they began to come to him with their troubles, and he tried to show them how they could make their lives better worth while by living at peace with their neighbours and looking out for those things that feed the spirit. They began to look for him as they looked for sunshine after a shower, and he failed them not. And because he was only a jester, and not a great man, he and the people understood each other, and the town was better because he lived in it. "I am from the East," quoth the traveller, "and my ways are not your ways. I know not what a

THE RICHER LIFE

jester's work may be, but I know that I have seen a good man and a wise one. I have travelled far and seen many men of power and learning, wealth and fame, and many men who profess much piety; but men of great soul are few. This man has turned his life to account, for the things of the spirit are better than the things of the body or of the mind."

And the innkeeper, though he comprehended not the full purport of the wise man's words, nodded, smiling, for he, too, loved the king's jester.

YOUTH is play time, and frivolity is condoned in the young; but I believe that the average young man — the every-day American — has more serious thoughts inside his head than he is given credit for,

HERMIT, KNIGHT AND JESTER

or than he himself would really acknowledge. When we are twenty-one we stand at the threshold of life, about to put away childish things and to become as men. We don't say much about it, but the thought disturbs us not a little. What of the future? What of our lives?

The majority of young Americans, as soon as they begin to take thought of the future, desire success above all else. But just how to obtain success, and just what success is, puzzles them. Experience has not taught them; they must set sail on faith. Then come the hard knocks, the disillusionings; dreams pale before the pitiless light of day. The struggle between idealism and materialism begins — a struggle bitter and to the death, which no poet has celebrated. No patron

THE RICHER LIFE

gods hover over the battlefield; no blare of trumpet or beat of drum stirs the weary heart to deeds of martial valour. No one cheers; no one knows. But because the fight is universal and vital, and because all the future depends upon the outcome, I venture to invade the realm of the commonplace and talk of these things.

When I was twenty-one I left the shelter of college halls, equipped, more or less adequately, with hope, ambition, and ideals. With me were the band of my fellows, and we went our several ways to seek our fortunes. Well, it has been a blind sort of a seeking for most of us, and I have sometimes felt that, for all our youthful self-confidence and wilfulness, the way might have been made a little plainer.

The teachers of our youth are all

HERMIT, KNIGHT AND JESTER

too often men of the study and the cloister, and it is hardly to be expected that non-combatants can successfully teach the art of war. I do not know the remedy for this, but I feel that it is a defect in our educational system. Ideals they taught us — ideals of honour, of altruism, of service, of scholarly and intellectual attainment. For this we thank them. They told us that these things were the desiderata of life, and that it was our duty and privilege to be better than our fellow-men, and by our example to lead them on to better things.

A delightful feeling of self-complacency this gave us, to be sure, but it was short-lived. When we left the protection of Alma Mater, and got into the thick of the struggle for existence, then did the disconcerting truth burst upon us that

THE RICHER LIFE

somehow our lofty ideals did not square with the facts of life as we found them. We discovered that, with all our degrees and our self-sufficiency, we were but privates in the army. Over us were captains of tens and captains of hundreds, and somewhere away above them were the great generals. We seemed a bit handicapped in our mission of purifying society.

When some of the conceit had been knocked out of us, we began to ask ourselves if we had not made some mistake in judgment and motive. Perhaps we were on the wrong road, after all. Success seemed to lie up another street. The crowd seemed to be going another way — on up the hill of material prosperity. If we changed our course a bit, we might reach a height where noble deeds would be possible; there was

HERMIT, KNIGHT AND JESTER

nothing noble in life in the valley. And so some of us turned and went with the crowd, and have become knights of greater or less renown, not without damage to our immortal souls. And some of us have set our faces against the stream, and sought some quiet backwater, there to remain, hermit-like, embittered against this wrong-headed old world. And some, I hope, have chosen a golden mean, striving, without loss of ideals, to take life as we find it and make the best of it.

And this making the best of it is the right course, I believe, and one not altogether plain to the average youth. For youth sees black and white, and travels blindly until the harmonizing effects of the neutral grays are discovered. If only the truth might be found earlier!

THE RICHER LIFE

I have spoken of college men, because with them the change comes abruptly, and the situation is acute. But all young men and women must face these questions sooner or later, in one form or another; and, in fact, we are all young until we are dead. As we grow older it is harder to turn off a long-travelled road, but it is not impossible.

There are things in life that are worth while and things that are not worth while. I construct this platitude for the sake of an axiomatic starting point. If we are at all thoughtful, we desire to attain to those things that are worth while and to disregard those things that are not worth while. We are not of those foolish ones who spend their labour for that which satisfieth not. But it is not always so easy to determine what things are worth

HERMIT, KNIGHT AND JESTER

while in life and what are not. Especially is the answer obscure to the young man of small experience. It might not be such a bad idea if every final examination paper for the Bachelor of Arts degree were to bear the question, "What is worth while in life?" It seems to me I recollect puzzling over questions less important than that. Let us consider what the correct answer would be.

I don't know whether it is deplorable or not, but it is true that academic idealism and the actualities of life do not jibe. In its undiluted form this idealism is essentially fallacious. The Brahmin may attain Heaven through contemplation, but not the twentieth-century American. Pure idealism fails because it is theoretical. It belongs to the millennium, not to the present.

THE RICHER LIFE

It takes into account a single force; it does not allow for the variations of the needle. But there is a vast difference between ideals and idealism, just as there is between sentiment and sentimentality. It is in the confusion of these that the error lies. No sane man will deplore ideals. They are worth while. Materialism, on the other hand, is equally fallacious, and for similar reasons. It takes no account of the human soul, and that tells the whole story. And that we have souls is proved by the very fact that these problems perplex us. If we were soulless, we should all be out-and-out materialists or utter fools.

Coleridge says in his "Table Talk": "Either we have an immortal soul, or we have not. If we have not, we are beasts; the first and wisest of

HERMIT, KNIGHT AND JESTER

beasts, it may be, but still true beasts. We shall only differ in degree, and not in kind; just as the elephant differs from the slug. But by the concession of all the materialists of all the schools, or almost all, we are not of the same kind as beasts — and this, also, we say from our own consciousness. Therefore, methinks, it must be the possession of a soul within us that makes the difference.”

Now, then, we arrive at the fundamental question: How can we nurture our souls, in spite of the materialism about us, without swinging over to ineffectual idealism? How may the practical ambition and the loftier vision be made to work in double harness? How can we find the golden mean — the harmonizing grays in the picture?

Those are questions we must answer

THE RICHER LIFE

for ourselves, according to our individual needs and circumstances; but if we have surely formulated the problem in its personal application, we shall have taken a long step toward the goal. The jester in the parable worked it out in his way; you and I must work it out in ours. And it will help us if we study the lives of those men about us who seem truly admirable, for the world is not all bad, and there are tens of thousands who have not bowed the knee to Baal.

For the young man who is choosing a career, the first question is, What is success? There is time enough ahead; let him sit down and consider it. Who is a successful man? Is it Ryan or Rockefeller, with all their wealth? Is it Parson Prayerful, that pious man, whose wife is ashamed of her last year's bonnet?

HERMIT, KNIGHT AND JESTER

All the wise men of all the ages have pointed out the folly of riches. I can add nothing to their scorn. "Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth" is a maxim for all time and all countries. And yet money is a good servant, though a hard master. Money stands for much that makes life happier. Parson Prayerful's family would be better off if he could provide a little more of it. It is the glorification of money, and the display of wealth, and the blighting power of the quest that starve and warp the soul.

And the very use of money seems to have a contaminating influence sometimes. A Hughes will give up an opportunity to make money for a seat on the Supreme Bench, and we say it is admirable; an Addicks will pay out money for a seat in the Senate, and we say it is des-

THE RICHER LIFE

picable. It is a complex question, and the wise man will avoid its complexities in his own life.

Money is not to be scorned when it is a good servant. Fame is not to be scorned when it is honestly won. Position is not to be scorned when it is an honourable one. The hermit is a fool for all his learning. It is the slavery to these things that crushes the soul.

These are not profound conclusions, but rather suggestive hints to set the young man thinking. For my object is to give some young man God-speed on the right road. The vast importance of formulating the purpose, defining the ideals, and clarifying the vision in youth, cannot be overestimated. Nine tenths of life's actions, say psychologists, depend upon habit. The importance of forming the right habits

HERMIT, KNIGHT AND JESTER

of thought is self-evident. A false step at the beginning of a career means much labour or disaster later. That youth is wise who early recognizes the importance of his own soul, and who makes an investment in the true and the lofty, as he would start a bank account. I beg your pardon, my young friend. You do not like preaching; neither do I. But it's a serious sort of business — this making the best of it — even for a jester, and it pays to look life in the face now and then, and get acquainted with it. And if we do not cramp our souls with sordid aims, and if we do not shut out the world from our souls because we disapprove of it, we can find much that is good in life — good people, good books, and beauty everywhere. We mustn't neglect our souls, that's all. And don't

THE RICHER LIFE

be discouraged if the world seems obstinate and does not respond to your efforts to reform it. Try helping some one person toward the richer life; it's easier and more satisfactory. And remember that neither materialism, nor idealism, nor wealth can make your life richer, nor that other person's, but only the cultivation of the things of the spirit.

I knew a man once who was, as I look back upon his life, a success. He was a newspaper editor in a New England city, and his salary needed much nursing to provide for the needs of his family. His life was not an easy one, and there were heart-wearying things in it; but he was known as a man of laughter and sunshine. He was, too, a man of intellect and wisdom, and in his youth he had dreams of literary achievement, I believe.

HERMIT, KNIGHT AND JESTER

Circumstances deprived him of the realization of those dreams, and he never won what he deserved. And yet, I say, his life was not in vain, for through it all his soul grew large and kind. He loved beauty, and the roses in his yard bloomed for him as though they felt the virtue of his touch. His heart was a fountain of perpetual youth, and he helped people to laugh and to sing. He did good deeds, and stood for truth and right in his community. He drew to him the love of men and the gratitude of women, and when he died there was mourning in other homes than his own.

I think I would prefer a little more of the ease of life than he had. It is less difficult for the soul to grow in the broad sunshine. And yet I think I would like to be something like him, if I could.



The King who wished to be Good



ONCE upon a time there lived a king who desired to be good. His father had been so wicked that his people hated him, and when the old king died and the young king ascended the throne, the kingdom was in a sorry state and almost on the point of rebellion. Now the old king's sins were too numerous to catalogue. His infidelity broke the queen's heart, and in a drunken rage he



THE GOOD KING

slew his only brother. In discovering novel forms of wickedness he showed an ingenuity worthy of a better cause.

Being a very bad old king, he paid little attention to the upbringing of his son, who consequently grew up entirely under his mother's influence. The queen was not a prodigiously wise woman, but experience had taught her the baneful effects of wickedness, and her teachings consisted largely in telling the young prince what not to do. She made him see to what condition the kingdom had come because of his father's wickedness. She showed him the ugliness of sin. She made him desire to shun it; she made him want to be good, but she taught him only how not to be bad.

So when the old king died and the young king reigned in his stead,

THE RICHER LIFE

he let it be known that he wished to be a good king. The people were very glad, for they were weary of royal vice, and they acclaimed the new king joyfully. "Now," said they, "we shall be a happy people again."

The king married a princess from a neighbouring realm, and when the people saw that he bade fair to be an exemplary husband, they rejoiced. He banished all the designing women and reckless roysters from his court; and established good men and ladies in their places. He caused extortion to cease and made peace with his neighbours. Then he seated himself quietly on his throne and devoted himself to the task of being a just and honourable monarch.

Years went by, and the king did no evil. He devoted himself ex-

THE GOOD KING

clusively to the avoidance of sin. But somehow he warmed not the people's hearts. There had been some who loved the old king in spite of his wickedness, for he could be a jolly good fellow when he would; but few there were who really loved his son. Both court and kingdom sank into a sort of righteous lethargy.

By and by a famine came. The rains fell not, and blight ruined the corn. The crops failed, and there was much misery when winter came. The king ordered certain sanitary measures to be taken, and saw to it that the police redoubled their vigilance, to prevent thieving and any other crime which the hard times might encourage.

But murmurings and grumblings arose among the people, and when they reached the ears of the king

THE RICHER LIFE

in his comfortable palace he was surprised and grieved.

“The people must be patient,” said he. “They should remember how much worse was their plight under a wicked king.”

But the murmurings grew louder, until one day a delegation of citizens came to the gates of the royal castle and demanded that something be done for their relief.

The king was alarmed and hastily summoned his council, but they gave him no consolation.

“Hunger and suffering have wrought the people to a frenzy,” they said. “Nothing can be done till another harvest.”

At his wits' end, the king at last sent for Fra Dominique, an old hermit who was reputed to be very wise.

“What shall I do?” cried the king

THE GOOD KING

in despair. "The people are turning against me — me, who have always been called Rudolph the Good."

"What hast thou done?" asked Fra Dominique.

"Done?" cried the king, mistaking his meaning; "I have done nothing. I have never ground down the people as my father did, but now they turn against me."

"But what hast thou done to make them love thee?" asked the sage.

"Hast gone among them, taking bread to the hungry and comfort to the sick? Hast ever spoken a kind word to old men or young mothers?"

"Ah," broke in King Rudolph, with a smile, "thou dost not understand. Those are not kingly tasks. Thou hast lived so long in thy mountain hut that thou hast forgotten how the affairs of men are conducted.

THE RICHER LIFE

It is for the king to rule, not to act as almoner or physician."

"Nay," replied Fra Dominique; "then I cannot help thee," and, shaking his hoary old head, he hobbled out of the audience room, while the courtiers tittered behind their hands.

The discontent grew apace as winter advanced and suffering increased. The royal palace was practically in a state of siege, and the king slept in a coat of mail for fear of his own people.

But the young queen, who had been born in a happier kingdom, heard the words of the old hermit and pondered them in her heart. And after the sun had set she slipped out to the cottage of Simon the gardener, whose wife lay sick of the fever. There she learned much that gave her food for thought, and on the

THE GOOD KING

following day she took bread and wine and went forth into the town, trembling and afraid, but steadfast in her purpose. She called at the old cobbler's shop and left food for his starving little ones, for there were no shoes to be made in those lean days. She visited the crusty old miller and gave him gold for flour which she left at the homes of the needy.

The next day she went forth again, and the next, and the next.

The people at first received her coldly and with suspicion, but soon they began to doff their caps and curtsy when she approached, and finally to follow her in the streets to kiss the hem of her robe. Her heart went out to the stricken and forlorn, and they blessed her and called her Madeline the Kind.

The queen saw that she was doing but little to alleviate the sufferings

THE RICHER LIFE

of the people, so at last she sent her jewels by a trusty courier to her father, and in the early spring great wains came over the mountains laden with grain, and flocks of sheep were driven into the valley to provide food and raiment for the stricken people.

Then came the work of sowing and cultivating, and with the prospect of good crops the people ceased their murmurings, and the king rested in peace. He rode forth again on his big roan mare, and the people saluted him as of yore.

“There rides Rudolph the Good,” said some.

“Yes,” said others, “but wait, and thou mayst have a glimpse of his queen, Madeline the Kind.”

At the head of his glittering cavalcade King Rudolph passed on beyond the town and out among the

THE GOOD KING

greening fields, and his heart swelled with pride.

“Ah!” he cried, “see what it is to be a good king!”

Then he bethought himself of old Fra Dominique, and, being in the mood, he urged his good mare up the winding path to the hermit’s hut. There he found the old sage poring over an ancient manuscript.

“Good morrow, Fra Dominique,” he cried, leaping from his horse. “And how is the gay world using thee?”

“Better than I deserve,” replied the hermit.

“Why sayest thou so?” asked the king. “Thou art a good man.”

“A man may be as good as a saint,” quoth the hermit, “but he is an old man who has lived long enough to do all the good that the world deserves of him.”

THE RICHER LIFE

“Thou speakest in riddles,” laughed the king. “See yonder fields with their growing corn, and the men singing at their work? They are happy because they have a good king, Fra Dominique.”

“Nay,” answered the hermit, “it is because they have a good queen. Listen, and I will give thee the truth of it. There is but one amulet that will ward off woe — one talisman that brings sleep to the pillow of king or peasant. It is the talisman Goodness. On one side of it is written the word ‘morality,’ and on the other, ‘kindness.’ It is incomplete and useless without both. To do no evil is not all of goodness. My stool does no evil. To be kind is not enough. My dog is kind to me, but he worries Goodwife Gretchen’s cat. Wear this talisman and thou wilt be indeed a good king.”

THE GOOD KING

But Rudolph was already weary of good counsel, and leaping on his mare he dashed down the hill with his merry cavaliers, while Fra Dominique bethought him of a certain very rich young man who had kept the law from his youth up, but when the Master bade him sell all he had and distribute unto the poor he was very sorrowful, for he was very rich.

ACCORDING to the comic papers, at least, the New Year is the time for the making of good resolutions. Why do we do it? What is the object of this annual turning over of the new leaf? What is that impulse in men and women that makes them feel that they have not been good enough? This being good is an odd thing, when you come to think of it. And

THE RICHER LIFE

the oddest thing about it is that we don't think about it — at least not to reason it out at all. We take it for granted that being good is at once a desirable and a difficult thing, and its difficulty is the chief thing that bothers us.

When we resolve to take more exercise, we do it with a distinct purpose; our livers are torpid or our belts too tight. When we resolve to read more literature and less newspaper, we do it because some one has made us feel ashamed of our ignorance. We say, "I will eat less," or, "I will save money," but we do not often say, "I will be a good person," any more than we say, "I will wear shoes," or, "Heaven helping me, I will breathe." We may not be good as easily as we breathe, but we do not question its desirability. The fact remains that plenty of

THE GOOD KING

people are not good, and may even possess a subconscious doubt as to the sense of it. Still, it is usually rather a matter of temperament; it comes more natural to some than to others.

But it isn't easy for any one to be good, and since it is so very hard for some, it is worth while raising the question as to the value of goodness. If it isn't really worth while, why bother with New Year resolutions and all that sort of thing? Why not be wicked and have a good time?

Old saws are mostly wrong, and we know it. "Be good and you'll be happy" convinces no one. The Psalmist's observation that "The wicked flourish as a green bay tree" was based upon a long and doubtless discouraging experience. The attitude of the naturally virtuous, that it is right to be good, simply

THE RICHER LIFE

begs the question. And so certain ultra-radicals arise and say it is right to be bad, and we are hard put to it for an answer. They shock us, Elbert Hubbard-wise, with brilliant and subversive epigrams, and we are not prepared with an adequate rejoinder.

Leaving piety aside — for that, it seems to me, is a manifestation of an entirely different impulse — let us consider of what goodness actually consists. I suppose we would all work it out in different ways, but to me it seems possible to divide goodness into two main elements: morality, which is negative and passive, and kindness, which is positive and active.

Morality is comprehended in the observation of the "Thou shalt not" portion of the Decalogue. I need not enumerate the Commandments.

THE GOOD KING

The moral man is the one who not only commits none of these sins, but avoids actions which border on them. Thus, the strictly moral man does not misrepresent, cheat, bribe, flirt with his neighbour's wife, or get drunk.

Good people have made a religion of morality, when what it needs is a reasonable philosophy. Morality has actually a secure, logical basis, only we have lost sight of that and have taken as an axiom what is actually a Q. E. D. If we were only familiar with the steps of the demonstration we would be armed against scoffers and against doubts. I actually heard a man, accused of an immoral action, ask, "Why not?" and no satisfactory answer was forthcoming. To have said, "Because it is wrong" would have been merely absurd.

THE RICHER LIFE

Nietzsche says, "Morality is the herd instinct in the individual." He needn't have been so scornful about it, for his definition expresses a perfectly valid reason why. When analyzed, it means that we inherit from the experience of countless generations of human beings the consciousness that the only way to live comfortably together is morally. Among these far-off ancestors were those who robbed, murdered, and took other liberties with one another, and that manner of living proved disastrous. It has therefore, become a part of our human instinct to regard immoral living as upsetting and entangling, and when this ancient truth is applied to the individual it works out just as completely as with the race.

We are trying for a little broadening of the mental horizon — you and I

THE GOOD KING

— for a little soul expansion and spiritual growth. We are after the richer life, and wickedness is bound to retard us in our quest. Wickedness complicates life. The simple, straightforward way of living is what gives our souls a chance to grow and so to become of some value to us. Uprightness, morality, truth, and decency give a clear, clean foundation for the richer life, while vice is a smothering force.

So, for that matter, is puritanism. Puritanism has done a great deal to strengthen our love of virtue, but it is an unreasoning, dogmatic thing — a blind leader of the blind. It builds a pontoon bridge across the morass; it does not touch bottom.

Moreover, puritanism is most annoying to certain minds and stirs up a harmful antagonism to the good

THE RICHER LIFE

that is in it. We must see clearly if we are to advance.

Truth, be it said in passing, is much misunderstood. There are those radicals who make a fetish of truth without understanding it. Because truth is naked, they seem to consider all nakedness truth. I have little patience with them.

Finally, there is the semi-moral man who believes that honesty is the best policy. It is; only the man who is honest for policy's sake misses the point. He is thinking of the opinion of his neighbours, and not of his own soul. One can get away from one's neighbours, glory be, but one must live a lifetime with one's own soul.

Morality, therefore, is the avoidance of the entanglements of vice, and I contend that it is essential to the richer life, even for men of genius,

THE GOOD KING

who, by the way, are often conspicuously immoral and conspicuously unhappy. They live on jagged mountain peaks; the average man is better off on a plateau.

Morality is essential, but I contend that it is merely negative and passive. It clears the way and makes soul-growth possible, but it does not make the soul grow. Something active must be added. The cultivator must be used after the plow. Christian ethics teaches us that faith without works is void, and the good king was only half good, after all.

If we are to bother at all with good resolutions this year, I would suggest taking a little thought on the subject of kindness. Kindness — or charity — is the active force of Christianity. Buddhist, Brahmin, Mohammedan, Confucian — all are

THE RICHER LIFE

moral, but only the Master taught the great truth of kindness. Kindness added to morality completes goodness. Kindness makes the world a better place to live in. Kindness dries up tears, heals wounds, feeds the hungry, comforts the distressed.

The followers of Nietzsche would have none of this. Their superman should climb to lonely heights on the necks of his less fortunate fellows. I would not be that superman for worlds. I believe that when he reaches that sublime height he will own a soul as shrivelled as a last year's pear, and will enjoy it about as much. Nietzsche missed the whole point of the Sermon on the Mount. Kindness is something he could not understand, and I pity him.

It takes a man-sized mind to com-

THE GOOD KING

prehend the full meaning of kindness. Only one great Teacher understood it perfectly. I can remember how utterly beyond my grasp it was when I was a child. If I could bring myself to live one day without committing some serious childish sin I was puffed with pride. Kindness was, I felt, a virtue reserved for mothers and other untempted persons. And I can't say truthfully that I have fully outgrown that feeling.

It is not easy to be kind. It is much more difficult than to be moral. It requires the strength of a grown man. It means more than mere forbearance and amiability. Gentleness is a mark of power, not of weakness.

But oh, how kindness helps the soul to grow! How it enriches life! How it extends the personality to include

THE RICHER LIFE

other people, and broadens the outlook of life! It gives us purpose, poise, direction. It gives groundwork and foundation to life. It provides something to live for when all else crashes in ruins about our ears. I fancy a really kind man would not think of suicide. And it furnishes one of the most interesting, alluring occupations imaginable.

And the best of it is that any one can be kind. It requires no special talent, no unusual advantages of training. It is harder for some men to be kind than to get rich, but kindness can be achieved by many, riches by few.

Yes, I think it is worth trying — this being good. I don't know what or where Heaven is; I don't much believe in Hell. But I do know that I would hate to enter Eternity

THE GOOD KING

— whatever Eternity may be — with the soul of a Machiavelli. Wherever our souls go, if they go anywhere when we die, they will be bare souls. They will be exposed to the full glare of the great white light that beats about the Throne, and there will be no covering those souls with fine raiment — no excusing their condition with clever sophistries. We cannot look into the future, but it is in our power to prepare our souls for whatever may happen, and I should prefer to take my chances with a soul that had not been choked with wickedness or stunted for lack of exercise. And if nothing happens at all — if annihilation is the end of life — at least goodness will not have done us a bit of harm.



The Opening of the Eyes of Jasper



ONCE upon a time there lived a family of very dull and respectable people. Their lives were so very commonplace that it must have been long ago. I don't believe anybody lives nowadays whose existence is so drab and uneventful. These people came into the world in a most ordinary and conventional manner. They were merely born. Then they grew up, and worked for a living. They were

THE EYES OF JASPER

married, and had children, and by and by took sick and died. And that's all there was to it. So when little Jasper was born it was taken as a matter of course. He was fed and clothed according to custom, and he cried and slept after the manner of infants. But in the spring before Jasper was born a wee bit of a meadow lark had been hatched out of an egg in a beautiful aspen grove far away. The sunshine was pouring into the nest when he first opened his eyes, and, as he was constantly looking upward for worms that his parents brought, he early became acquainted with the green leaves and the blue sky. And as soon as ever he could he learned to sing. By and by the time came for him to leave the nest and he started out to see the world, singing, as he went, of the green leaves and the blue sky.

THE RICHER LIFE

One day, in the warm summer weather, he alighted on the sill of an open window, and because of the joyousness in his heart he poured forth a glad and rippling song.

The people inside the house were very busy at the time and did not hear the meadow lark, but the song fell full on the pink ears of a new-born babe in the room; it was the first sound in this wonderful world that little Jasper heard.

Of course, Jasper did not know this, but the song sank unawares into his tiny soul, and stayed there. So Jasper grew up with a song in his heart, and the song troubled him. It told him that afar off there was a beautiful green aspen grove with blue sky above it, and Jasper longed to find the aspen grove.

Now there was nothing to sing about at Jasper's home, and when he grew

THE EYES OF JASPER

up to be a young man he began to think. Somewhere, he knew, there was a place of beauty, and because the meadow lark's song had made a poet of him he resolved to find it. His brothers, who had not been greeted at birth by a bird's song, could not understand him. Life seemed a very plain, measured-out affair to them. Why bother one's head about the unattainable? But Jasper's song would not let him rest, and finally he left his home and started out in search of the Good, the True, and the Beautiful.

Now all Jasper's training had taught him that the way to get anywhere was to keep putting one foot before the other. That was the only way he knew of to find the Good, the True, and the Beautiful. So on he went up the road and over the hill — left foot, right foot, left foot,

THE RICHER LIFE

right foot — trudging patiently along. The days went by, and ever before him stretched the brown road. It led through woods and fields and villages, but Jasper did not meet with the Good, the True, and the Beautiful. Every time he reached the top of a hill or a bend in the road he looked eagerly ahead for something bright and unusual, but he was always disappointed. He met men and women, but they were just folks, queer or ordinary, and they could not tell him where to look for the object of his quest. Once he came to a great city, and entered it with joy, but its streets proved to be ugly and dirty and very confusing, and he was glad to come out on the other side. The Good, the True, and the Beautiful were not there. Finally, one gray day, he lost heart

THE EYES OF JASPER

altogether, and sat down on a log by the wayside, and buried his head in his hands. And as he sat there, wrapt in woe, there came one singing up the road. The song was like the one that lay slumbering in Jasper's heart, and, hearing it, he looked up in spite of himself, and saw a burly fellow in a leathern apron. Seeing Jasper sitting in such a disconsolate attitude, the stranger approached and seated himself on the log at Jasper's side.

"What is the matter, brother?" he inquired. "Has thy lady played thee false, or hast thou lost thy purse? Those are the two things which make most men miserable."

"Neither," said Jasper.

"Tell me," bade the other. "Let me help thee."

Jasper looked at his big, hairy arms, his leathern apron, and his sooty

THE RICHER LIFE

face, and replied: "Thou canst not help me. I have neither horse to be shod nor cart to be mended."

At this the big fellow laughed a deep-throated laugh.

"And why, pray, may not a blacksmith be a philosopher?"

Jasper pondered.

"I never thought of that," said he. Then Jasper told the blacksmith of his hunger for the Good, the True, and the Beautiful, and the tale of his bootless quest. When he had finished, the blacksmith broke forth into a loud and hearty roar of laughter, slapping his knee with his mighty palm.

"But I see no cause for mirth," said Jasper, surprised and nettled. "No," said the blacksmith, "and there are many other things that thou dost not see. That is because thou art more than half blind. Thou art like a man hunting all over

THE EYES OF JASPER

the house for the coat that is on his back. Thou sayest that thou hast a song in thy heart? Hast thou looked there for Goodness, Truth, and Beauty?"

"I understand thee not," quoth Jasper.

"See," cried the blacksmith, pointing to a little white flower that grew from the dirt and decaying wood under the log. "Here is a bit of Goodness, Truth, and Beauty at thy feet, and thou didst not see it. Thou art blind, I say. Now listen, that thine eyes may be opened. This little flower is pure white and perfect. See how gracefully it stands on its slender stem. See how beautifully alike and yet unlike are its five snowy petals. There is a whole world of the Good, the True, and the Beautiful in this little flower. And yet it grows from

THE RICHER LIFE

the common earth beneath the shadow of a rotting log. It typifies the Creation and the Universe. It is part of God's plan, and is a product of His craftsmanship. I am a skilled workman, but I could not make a thing of beauty like that. And yet thou didst not see it! All about thee are the Good, the True, and the Beautiful — in sea and wood and sky, and in the hearts of thyself and thy fellows. The object of thy quest lies not at the end of the road, but on both sides of it and overhead. Yonder, at the edge of the village, is my dingy smithy. There I toil all day for my wife and children. But in the wall above my bellows is a little window that frames a square of blue sky, and through the open doorway I can see the green meadows, with the cattle in them, and the purple hills. There I see

THE EYES OF JASPER

Goodness, Truth, and Beauty. Friends pass the door and shout a greeting, and I look into their hearts and find Goodness, Truth, and Beauty there. A spider has spun a web across my window pane, a perfect wheel of finest silk, and up in the pear tree, just within my sight, the robins have a nest, and busily come and go all day long. Beside my door the daisies bloom, and peep in at me when the wind blows. In all these I see the Good, the True, and the Beautiful, because mine eyes are open. I watch them as I blow the fire in my forge, and then when I bend my back again to the anvil I needs must sing.

“Go thy way, brother, back to the place whence thou camest. I know not who thou art or what thy calling, but I know that the object of thy quest lies at thine own door.”

THE RICHER LIFE

So saying, he arose and took his departure, singing.

Now Jasper was young, and he did not believe all that the blacksmith had said, but for want of a better thing to do he picked up his staff, and set out again for home.

And as he went he noticed many little white flowers by the roadside, and each had five snowy petals and stood on a graceful, slender stem. He began to look for them, instead of contemplating the brown wheel tracks; and so it came about that he saw many things besides — a flock of blackbirds, wheeling and alighting in a cornfield — a cloud that hung like thistledown over a hilltop — a collie that sat, with ears erect, guarding a flock of sheep — a little stone cottage that lay dozing behind a flaming laburnum — an old peasant couple that sat hand in hand on

THE EYES OF JASPER

their doorstep in the gloaming. And by the time he reached the top of the hill overlooking his home town the song in his heart was awake again, and more joyous than ever before, and so many beautiful things thronged in upon his vision that there was not time to contemplate them all. Below him lay the village amid its ivyed elms, the white houses glistening in the sun like patches of snow, and the church spire, standing slim and graceful, in their midst. As he entered the village with springing step, a maid, who had been his playmate, ran forth to meet him, and in her eyes he saw a light he had never observed before. And somewhere a meadow lark was singing rapturously of a green aspen grove and the sunshine.

When Jasper reached home his brothers asked him banteringly:

THE RICHER LIFE

“Didst find the Good, the True, and the Beautiful, foolish Jasper?”
And he replied, “I did.”

THE story of Jasper is, you will notice, but a new version of the old story in the Fourth Reader (or it may have been the Third) which tells of two lads who went for a walk; one of them saw much to report and the other nothing at all. Which of these lads are you? Are you Jasper going or Jasper coming? It's a question worth considering, as I shall try to show.

The human mind has such a tremendous amount of work to do that it is obliged to make use of labour-saving devices. According to the psychologists, it constantly seeks to make its work less arduous by referring as many actions as possible to the memory and the reflex nerve

THE EYES OF JASPER

centres. The mind is a general that has time for little save the issuing of orders. That is what they call the brain's ideo-motive force. The child has to devote his entire mind to the complex act of walking; divert his attention and he comes to grief. We experienced grown-ups simply give the word of command and our legs do the rest. "Home," we say, and our legs carry us there, giving our brains a chance to think of the stock market or our clothes or any other elevating topic. If every act of our fingers depended on the complete construction of a mental picture of it and a definite effort of the will we should scarcely finish dressing before bedtime. This delegating of our every-day actions to our various members produces what we know as habit, and if you will think of all your motions

THE RICHER LIFE

and actions in a single day you will see that 90 per cent. of them are the result of habit.

Some habits are useful and some are not. I have a habit of smoothing my hair when I talk — a perfectly useless operation. I suppose once my brain told my hand to do it, but now my hand goes ahead and performs this precious function on its own account, and energy is wasted. But, in general, it is plain that habits are absolutely necessary if we are to accomplish anything at all, though General Brain is never relieved of the responsibility of seeing to it that the habits are good.

All of this has been scientifically and thoroughly explained by Professor James and others. What I want to show is a certain specific failing that this habit-making faculty of ours is likely to lead us into;

THE EYES OF JASPER

and that is the tendency of our minds to get lazy and let the habits do all the work. In a word, we are prone to get into a groove or rut. Some are born in ruts, some achieve ruts, and some are thrust into ruts, but in every case the rut is a soul-deadening thing, and the sooner we get out of it the better. You can't see out of a rut, and the Good, the True, and the Beautiful never lie at the end of it. Life in a rut is necessarily narrow and uninteresting.

By this I do not mean to praise the butterfly life. Flitting is equally ineffectual. The unsystematic man is an abomination before the Lord. But there is a golden mean. It is the attitude that counts — the freshness of interest in all things, the youthfulness of the spirit. The Good, the True, and the Beautiful are on every hand for him who has

THE RICHER LIFE

his eyes open. Don't be a mole; that is the text of my sermon.

Now the best way I know of to force one's self to look up out of the rut, and eventually to crawl out, is to train the sense of observation. This is easier for some people than it is for others. John Burroughs says, "Some people seem born with eyes in their heads, and others with buttons or painted marbles." And it is easier to form the habit of observation in childhood than in maturity, and I believe that this should be one of the first propositions in the study of pedagogics. But to develop this faculty is possible even for the oldest and blindest of us.

Now the ways and means of accomplishing this purpose are manifold. The whole field of art and literature and science lies open to us, and,

THE EYES OF JASPER

greatest and best of all, the intimate study of nature.

Nature study, I find, requires some explanation. The American type of mind looks askance at any theory or pursuit that does not produce practical, tangible results. Hence the student of nature finds himself obliged to defend his principles. It is not enough for him to say that he prefers to know a hemlock from a spruce. He must justify himself in terms of the practical. Such justification, however, is not impossible.

A vast deal of twaddle is written about the beauties of nature, but that's not the thing. To exclaim over the beauty of a sunset indicates no very deep understanding. We Americans are inclined to look for short cuts. We pride ourselves on our ability to appreciate things that

THE RICHER LIFE

we know little or nothing about. The true value of nature study, for old as well as young, lies in the training of the observation, a faculty that civilization is doing its best to destroy in us. It took no effort on the part of the savage to read sermons in stones, and books in the running brooks.

We go into the country, and we see trees and fields and hills, and most of us do not entirely miss their message. But for many the columbine and blue gentian bloom unheeded by the wayside, and the yellow warbler sings unheard and unseen in the thicket. Eyes have we, but we see not; ears, but we hear not. These avenues of sensuous delight and intellectual satisfaction have become clogged through disuse, and every day we miss something of the wonder and the joy of life.

THE EYES OF JASPER

Nature study is simply one way — perhaps the best way — of training the observation, but the main thing is to get the eyes open somehow. And get your heart open, too. When you were a child the world was more interesting to you — life was richer. Get young again, for except ye become as little children ye shall not enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

I know it isn't easy. The old habits are strong. Old dogs don't take to new tricks. You want to make the world more interesting to yourself. You want to live the richer life. But the burdens press down upon you. The environment is all wrong. Circumstances are against you, and the rut is deep. It's hard, I know, but not half so hard as you think it is. Look up out of the rut and try it. Look for

THE RICHER LIFE

simple things. Life is too short to spend it in a search for the unattainable. Jasper found that out. This is the world we are living in; for this life there is no other. If we shut our eyes to the good things in it, we have only ourselves to blame. Look about you and observe the Good, the True, and the Beautiful that are close at hand. Look for them in God's growing things, in good books, in the hearts of your friends. And when again you bend your back to the anvil, think of the new things you have seen, and perhaps you'll be singing, after all. Heaven lies about us in our maturity as well as in our infancy, if we will but open our eyes and look.



The Prince and the Maidens Three

ONCE upon a time there lived a widow with three young daughters. Their father had been a nobleman, but toward the end of his life he had staked the greater part of his estate on a cause that had failed, so that he left but little behind him. Now the widow was shrewd and she loved her daughters, so she began planning how their fortunes might be retrieved. But

THE RICHER LIFE

cudgel her brain as she might, she could think of no way to make them all rich and happy, for the reason that there was only one wealthy and handsome prince in the whole neighbourhood, and he could not marry all three. So she at last decided to make the best of a bad matter, and ensnare him for one of her daughters, in the hope that the others might have their chance later.

Unfortunately, these three daughters — Esmerelda, Dorothea, and Marguerite -- had been born a little too late, for fairy godmothers had become exceedingly scarce in that country, and there was only one for all three girls. However, the mother went to her for counsel. "I beg of thee a boon," she said. "My daughters are poor, and when I die I know not what will become

THE PRINCE AND THE MAIDENS

of them, unless one of the three marries the prince. Canst thou not give them such exceeding beauty that the prince, seeing one of them, will fall in love with her, and desire her for his wife?"

The fairy godmother thought a long time before answering. At length she said:

"Alas! I would that I could grant thy request, for I love my godchildren; but these be lean days for fairy godmothers, as thou knowest. Formerly I should have had three wishes apiece for them, but now I have but one to go around among the three. I will make Dorothea the beautiful one, for she already has the blue eyes and the golden hair. For Esmerelda, take this ring. In it is a rare and beautiful ruby from India. Take it to Nathan the Jew and sell it for a great price. It will not be

THE RICHER LIFE

enough for all three daughters, but it will provide fine raiment and a dowry for one. Let Esmerelda have this, since she is the eldest.”

“But what of little Marguerite?” asked the mother.

“Alas!” cried the fairy godmother, “I have nothing to give her. But send her to me, and I will teach her such things as I can.”

So the three daughters went to their fairy godmother, one by one. And to Esmerelda she gave the ruby ring and her blessing; and to Dorothea she gave the gift of beauty and her blessing; but to little Marguerite she gave only her blessing, and kissed her on the lips.

As the three maidens grew to womanhood Esmerelda learned to dress and act like a great lady. She wore fine silks and satins and velvets and jewels, and sat up on her white palfry

THE PRINCE AND THE MAIDENS

like a queen. Moreover, it was known that there was a comfortable dowry waiting for him who should claim her hand. So when, through the careful management of her mother, it came to pass that the rich and handsome prince met Esmerelda, he was so taken by her queenly air and aristocratic bearing and the evidence of her affluence that, being a man of the world, he at once became her suitor.

Meanwhile Dorothea had been growing beautiful beyond description. Being poor, she dressed simply, but this served to accentuate her beauty the more. She bathed her throat and brow with milk, and her eyes with dew from the cups of lilies, and she combed her hair seven times daily, so that it was like gold floss in its simple blue silken circlet. Her throat was like white roses, her

THE RICHER LIFE

eyes like the larkspur, and her body as lithe and graceful as the reeds in the marshes.

So when the prince, who had come to woo Esmerelda, saw fair Dorothea he straightway fell heels over head in love with her beauty. What were Esmerelda's satins and jewels, he asked, compared with eyes and hair like these? Besides, he had discovered a little vertical line between Esmerelda's eyes, and sharpness in her words. Oh, he was a shrewd prince, and a poet as well. But no sooner had the prince started to court Dorothea than he began to perceive her failings. She was not perfect, either. She was heavenly to look upon, but her speech was like the cooing of doves — all softness and monotony. She had not half the wit of his mother's serving maid. His wooing became silent,

THE PRINCE AND THE MAIDENS

for one cannot talk forever to a voiceless flower. The prince found himself between the horns of a dilemma.

One day, as he was walking in the fields beside his horse, trying to decide which of the two ladies to wed, he came upon little Marguerite, playing with a hound. Now Marguerite was grown to womanhood, but she had neither Esmerelda's queenly bearing nor Dorothea's beauty. Her dress was plain, and there were freckles across the bridge of her funny little nose. But her eyes were bright and merry, and the prince paused to speak to her. Before he knew it he was seated on the river bank beside her, while she talked vivaciously of Hugo the hound, her flower garden in the orchard, the old cobbler in the village who had once been to the wars,

THE RICHER LIFE

and ever so many interesting and amusing things, speaking sometimes seriously and sometimes lightly, but always saying something worth the hearing. And the prince, weary of Esmerelda's haughty affectations and Dorothea's soft inanities, enjoyed her company till sundown. Well, the upshot of it all was, as you may have guessed, that the prince married little Marguerite, and they lived happily ever after; and all because the fairy godmother, lacking other gifts, had taught Marguerite how to talk.

Now the moral of this tale is not how to capture a rich and handsome husband, for princes like this one do not live nowadays, and if one did, I don't know of three sisters who would take so much trouble to catch him. Times have changed. But it is just as true to-day as it was

THE PRINCE AND THE MAIDENS

then that two thirds of the people in the world don't know how to talk and never realize why wealth and beauty don't make up for the lack of conversational ability. Pearls fall from the lips of some, vipers from others; but most people merely blow bubbles, and bubble blowing becomes tiresome in time.

All of which is a rather frivolous introduction to a somewhat serious subject; for I believe that "Can you talk?" is one of the important questions on life's examination paper.

EVOLUTIONISTS point with pride to the exact period in faunal development when the spine superseded the notochord, when a centralized nervous ganglion first appeared, when toes were produced on mammalian extremities. They tell us that a monkey walked erect for some reason or

THE RICHER LIFE

other, and that he came into possession of a cerebrum, a prehensile tail, and that priceless treasure, three small bones in the middle ear. Then they leap light-heartedly over the intervening gap, and lo! you have man.

The anthropologist then takes up the good work, and has a wee bit to say about the development of the artistic instinct, and other things which are vastly interesting so far as they go. But what I want to know is, who invented speech? Was it monkey, man, or monkey-man? Did some simian mother, in a moment of anxiety, suddenly find herself able to cry out: "Here, you, James Edward, come away from that crocodile!" Or did man, after he had acquired sufficient cerebral power, painfully invent the system of commu-

THE PRINCE AND THE MAIDENS

nicating thoughts by prearranged variations of vocal noises? I'm afraid the scientists will never tell me; but I want to know, for I want to compose a eulogy to that anthropoid ape or antediluvian genius. Or perhaps God handed the gift to Adam ready made. One may as well believe so. Holy Writ is authority for the theory. And Adam, I am sure, was as pleased to receive it as you or I would be if we had been born dumb. With what childlike joy he straightway rushed about the garden, saying to this creature, "You are an armadillo," and to that flower, "You are joepye-weed," or Edenese words to that effect. However the gift of speech originated, it is one of the most priceless of our human possessions. For conversation is a distinctly human attribute. The beasts of the field

THE RICHER LIFE

possess it only in the most imperfect degree. Conversation belongs only to creatures with souls, and I am inclined to think that the value of our conversation is more or less indicative of the size and value of our souls. At any rate, I observe that neglect of conversation and neglect of our spiritual selves go hand in hand, and I believe that an improvement in our conversation would benefit our souls and so do much to enrich our individual lives. Man is so thoroughly a social being that if you place him on a desert island with no one to talk to he is likely to go mad. But place him in a parlour, and give him every chance in the world to develop the art of soul-satisfying conversation, and what does he do? Nine times out of ten he puts his brain to sleep, and lets his larynx utter such sounds

THE PRINCE AND THE MAIDENS

as it will. A gorilla can do as much. His conversation is quite soulless. Therefore, the question is sometimes asked, and not without pertinence, Is conversation coming to be a lost art in America? If it is, we deserve the worst our critics can say of us, for we become essentially as dumb beasts.

Mr. John Butler Yeats, a cultured Irish artist, father of William Butler Yeats, the poet, has been in this country for some little time, studying us. He says that our conversation is vapid, because we lack the critical instinct. Things are "perfectly lovely" with us, or "awful" or "grand" or "punk," as the case may be, and we let it go at that. Detailed and thoughtful criticism we avoid as being too irksome, and so we are losing the art of conversation.

THE RICHER LIFE

This art, like many others, was at its height in the days of Good Queen Bess. Men and women took time to talk then, and the English language became enriched. The spirit of the Elizabethans still lingers, says Mr. Yeats, in the Irish people. They talk. They are never too busy to stop and hold converse. They are witty, voluble, conversationally resourceful. They roll their r's, and enjoy the sonorousness of their own phrases.

Mr. Yeats may be right. We do elide and abbreviate and seek the path of least resistance in conversation. But I am always a little suspicious of foreign criticism. For who of us is tribally unbiased? To us the Frenchman is frothy and nervous, the German heavy and coarse, the Englishman dull and stupid or foppish, and the Irishman pug-

THE PRINCE AND THE MAIDENS

nacious and tiresome. Thus we are all prone to generalize unfairly, and it may be that Mr. Yeats has not fully appreciated our style.

We must, nevertheless, admit that our parlour intercourse is usually not soul-satisfying; and there is surely one way in which we Americans do err most grievously. I refer to the curse of talking shop. Shop talk has spoiled more good conversation than dull brains. It indicates a restricted intellect, a foreshortened horizon, the narrow life of the rut, the little soul. The modern science of dentistry is a wonderful thing, but think of bicuspid and bridge work as an exclusive after-dinner topic! And the worst offenders are those who ought to know better — artists, musicians, and “litt’ry” folk. You can make any good calling a bore by talking

THE RICHER LIFE

too much about it. That's what I don't like about missionaries. Good people, they are, too.

Oh, get a broader perspective to life! Give your soul elbow room. Get some ideas of your own, and put them into words. Don't be a parrot!

I believe that this question of conversation is more important than it looks at first glance. It strikes down close to the roots of life. For the spiritual nature is man's greatest heritage, and the quality of his speech is an indication of the quality of his soul. That is why we abhor profanity; it is the small soul's substitute for original expression.

Conversely, training in the art of conversation is one way of benefiting the soul and enriching life. The very effort to express a thought crystallizes it, and we straightway

THE PRINCE AND THE MAIDENS

understand it better ourselves. Your deep thinker is usually a good talker, for the exchange of ideas is a mental stimulus. More than that, it is soul exercise, and at the same time produces the food upon which the soul is nourished.

It is not the quantity of conversation but the quality that counts. Mere talk is cheap. That is why we value it so little and waste it so much. We fill our bargain counters with remnants, often tawdry or shop-worn; it's too much trouble to reach for the better grade goods on the top shelves. But the effort pays, if we will make it. Every honest attempt at good conversation is a stone in the building of character, along with the resisted temptation and the well-wrought piece of craftsmanship.

The neglect of this effort, and the

THE RICHER LIFE

slipping into slovenly conversational habits, indicate weakness of character and an ingrowing soul; whereas the cultivation of the art is a means, ready to hand, of enriching life. For how much richer and happier is that life which is lighted by the wit and humour and subtle charm of good conversation, based on real thoughts, than that whose only soul language is shop talk, gossip, or drawing-room inanities!

Yes, this is surely one of the ways of getting more out of life — one of the ways of reaching up out of the rut. Just how to go about it is a question for the individual to solve, but the solution is usually not hard, and the man or woman who avoids it through slothfulness deserves only scolding.

There is one person who must not

THE PRINCE AND THE MAIDENS

be scolded, however, and that is the one who "loses his tongue," as we say, in company. Shyness is a misfortune, not a fault, and a great stumbling-block in the way. Parents of shy children should study them carefully, and help them to learn to talk. And if you are one of those shy grown children; if you long to open your heart and speak, but cannot; if your tongue cleaves to the roof of your mouth, and the best thoughts born within you die before they leave your lips in commonplace utterances, you have a harder task before you than your neighbour's, and the more credit to you if you conquer. Meanwhile, take courage in the thought that for purposes of soul culture one friend is better than a parlour full of magpies. The art of conversation does not mean merely the ability to enter-

THE RICHER LIFE

tain brilliantly, and I doubt not that some of the world's best sayings have been uttered in quiet family circles, where no record was ever made of them save on the souls of those who spoke and listened.



The Art of Bernice and Agatha



ONCE upon a time there were two sisters named Bernice and Agatha. They were both excellent persons, with the desire in their hearts to reach up to better things and to be of some service to their fellow-creatures. They were unmarried and lived together in a little white house on High Street. Their modest wants being supplied by the income from a small inheritance, they were relieved from the

THE RICHER LIFE

necessity of spending their lives in the quest for daily bread, and they had outgrown sordid aims and youthful follies. They were very excellent ladies, with clear consciences, a healthy appetite for those things which bring satisfaction to the soul, and a refined appreciation of beauty.

Now Bernice and Agatha were much alike in the fundamentals of life, but they sought soul food in different directions, just as the humming-bird and the robin differ in their methods.

Bernice had developed ideals of culture that led her into a literary circle. After many hours spent in the town library she read a beautiful paper on Robert and Elizabeth Browning before the circle.

Agatha, on the other hand, admitted that she didn't enjoy Browning;

BERNICE AND AGATHA

she preferred to stay at home and read the novels of George Eliot, in which she found interesting things about real folks.

Bernice took up arts and crafts with enthusiasm (she pronounced crafts with a very broad a) and did stencil work and hammered brass in art nouveau designs.

Agatha made the most perfect buttonholes in the county.

Bernice's room was decorated in a close harmony of grays and greens, and she permitted only golden-rod and white roses in her Wedgwood vase.

Agatha's room was decorated in chintz effects — chintz looked so old-fashioned. And she kept in her vases asters and sweet peas, and anything she liked.

By and by the tastes of the two sisters grew very far apart. Bernice

THE RICHER LIFE

became so artistic that Agatha's homely ideals seemed very uncultured to her.

"Agatha, dear," she would say, "I wish you would put that atrocious old painting of the lighthouse up in the garret. I will give you a mezzotint reproduction of Corot to take its place."

"Put it away?" cried Agatha. "Why, it was father's!"

"I know," expostulated Bernice, "but it is horribly out of drawing. The perspective and composition are faulty, and the colours are far too intense."

"I don't know anything about that," retorted Agatha. "I only know that I like it. And if I like a thing, it's good enough art for me."

Bernice sighed and assumed the attitude of a pre-Raphaelite maiden gazing out of the window.

BERNICE AND AGATHA

Agatha scowled, and started a hem. Matters went from bad to worse. Bernice gorged herself with art. She went to Boston and enjoyed a week's dissipation at the opera and among the art galleries. She met some tremendously clever (not to say queer) people. Agatha stayed at home and won a burnt-wood Indian's head at a whist party, and hung it on the parlour wall.

When visitors came, Bernice started æsthetic conversations on genius, art, and modern German drama; Agatha, out of pure stubbornness, changed the subject to strawberry preserves and spring house cleaning. Bernice became so extremely artistic that she actually grew thin; Agatha remained domestic and stout. Bernice felt that her sister lacked all refinement of taste; Agatha con-

THE RICHER LIFE

sidered Bernice silly, affected, and wanting in common-sense.

Finally Uncle John came to visit them. Now Uncle John was so wise and good that both sisters looked up to him, and each anticipated a sort of justification of her mental attitude. Uncle John saw at once that something was wrong, and it didn't take him long to find out what it was.

One evening before he left he undertook a little fatherly advice. "You girls must get over this nonsense," said he. "You are both to blame. Agatha, you are troubled with fatty degeneration of the soul. You ought to wake up and get acquainted with more of the refinements of life. Beauty is a physical property and not altogether a matter of taste. It is governed by laws, and the better you under-

BERNICE AND AGATHA

stand those laws the more you will appreciate beauty. And the sooner you come to the full appreciation of beauty the better it will be for your soul. Bernice, you are suffering from a bad case of fiddlesticks. You have acquired a superficial smattering of art talk. You have learned the patter of the cult. You have been hovering around some lofty truths and never getting at the honey. You have fallen into the common error of supposing that queer, one-sided people are children of genius, and therefore more to be desired than the great mass of mankind. You consider human nature bourgeois. Agatha thinks that art is foolishness; you think that it is everything, and neither of you knows what art is." Then he delivered a brief lecture on art, at the close of which the sis-

THE RICHER LIFE

ters arose coldly, said "good night," and went to their rooms.

After Uncle John had departed, neither of the sisters alluded to what he had said. Bernice went obstinately on her way and steeped herself in artificiality; but Agatha took Uncle John's words to heart and pondered them. She began to study into the meaning of it all, and struggled to get her eyes open. She went and stood before the Indian's head and looked at it a long time, until she discovered that it did not belong with the simple colonial furniture of the room. So she took it down and quietly put it away.

One day she discovered that the various hues of the phlox in her garden did not harmonize, and, although her mother had planted them, she uprooted the offending

BERNICE AND AGATHA

plants and transferred them to the other side of the garden, beyond the larkspurs.

At last she devoted three days to a study of the painting of the lighthouse, and with tears in her eyes finally removed it.

Agatha came to learn that some things and some combinations of things are more beautiful than others, and she worked painstakingly to understand. Bernice had a good copy of a painting by Sir Joshua Reynolds, and Agatha studied it long and conscientiously until she discovered wherein it was better than the painting of the lighthouse. She read a little about art in the secret of her room, until at last she came to feel that she knew a few of the fundamental principles. She took no critic's dictum as gospel, but allowed her

THE RICHER LIFE

judgment to be guided by those who knew better than she. She never got to the point of talking learnedly like Bernice, but she got her eyes open at last, and found herself examining all things with a view to discovering what beauty lay in them. She gained pleasure in beautifying her home and her garden; and her soul, she discovered, was nourished by a contemplation of things which her new judgment told her were beautiful.

When Uncle John came again he found Bernice just the same, only a little sour at the majority of people, with whom she had lost patience. But in Agatha's eyes he read a new happiness, as she showed him her house and her garden and her humble personal treasures, and talked with him simply of her quest for the beautiful.

BERNICE AND AGATHA

“Blessed be thou, Agatha,” quoth he, “for thou hast accomplished something and thy soul hath grown.” Of Bernice, who had been talking ecstatically with him of Rodin and Sudermann, he said nothing.

IN MATTERS touching upon art I find a large proportion of mankind — and especially womankind — divided pretty generally into two classes: those who gush and those who scoff. I am not speaking of those who have a sane and healthy knowledge of art, but of that vast majority who have but a little time to devote to its study. I believe that both classes are wrong in their attitude, because they both treat art as an intangible product of genius quite apart from life. They both treat knowledge as they treat clothes. One person dresses

THE RICHER LIFE

a la mode and feels, therefore, like a gentleman or a lady; the other dresses "for comfort," and scorns finery.

The gushing class is amusing and irritating. Lacking a sense of humour themselves, they do not realize that their lofty vapourings seem ridiculous to the bulk of their fellows. Or, if they have a slight sense of this, they avoid it by herding with one another. Hence these groups of "clever" people who foregather to congratulate themselves that they are not as other men are. The scoffing class needs scolding, like all who sit in the seat of the scornful. Their crass ignorance is often but thinly veiled beneath a sneer. An honest philistine I can sympathize with, but not the materialist who pities my poor enthusiasms.

BERNICE AND AGATHA

These two classes are at opposite poles; they seldom get together on common ground, and that's a bad thing for men and women, for higher civilization will come only with tolerance, better understanding of one another, and the destruction of unreasoning prejudice. Therefore it has seemed to me worth while to look dispassionately at this question, and, laying aside preconceived notions, to ask, What is art? and, What good is it, anyway? The effort is worth while because, if art is good for anything, it should be a means of enriching life, and now that we have signed the emancipation proclamation of our souls, that is what we are looking for. To go back to first principles, just a word as to the function of beauty in human life:

This is a beautiful world. Beauty

THE RICHER LIFE

is an attribute of nearly every natural object — of sky, of hills, of trees, of birds, of flowers. If we have eyes, we perceive beauty on every hand. Our first impulse upon seeing a sunset, a mountain lake, or a rose is to exclaim, "Isn't it beautiful?" Their reasons for being, their utilitarian functions have no place in our first thoughts. Beauty is the great fact that we grasp. Beauty is one of the greatest facts in the universe.

There are those cold scientists who would prove that all beauty is utilitarian. The lily is beautiful to attract the pollen-scattering butterfly; the oriole is beautiful to attract his mate at breeding time. But I am inclined to think that the scientist would be sore put to it to explain all beauty on these grounds. Beauty, I believe, has

BERNICE AND AGATHA

small practical value in the world, from a material point of view. God gave us beauty for the delectation of our souls, and that's reason enough.

Beauty, therefore, is one of the most nourishing of soul foods, and that soul is richest and gets the most out of life which contemplates beauty the most. Soul life is the ethical life. Would you learn life's most fundamental ethical truths? Consider the lilies of the field.

Beauty is as necessary to the growth of the soul as water is to the body. Every time the mind dwells upon an unclean or ugly thing, the soul is injured; every time it rejoices in a beautiful thing, the soul is fed. Now art, I take it, is man-created beauty. It can never surpass nature, but it can interpret nature to the soul, and it adds to the sum

THE RICHER LIFE

total of beauty in the world. Man must ever be making things. When he makes ugly things, he makes things that can injure the soul; when he makes beautiful things, he makes things that can enrich life; and that is art.

Art is the visible, tangible, or audible evidence of man's relation to beauty. It is an uplifting mood crystallized.

Not everything that we call art is worthy of the name. If it does not touch life, if it fails to satisfy the soul's appetite for beauty, it does not fulfil its mission. I care not how excellent the technique or how startling the idea, I care not what the critics may say; if it fails in these functions it is not art. Therefore, it behooves us all to consider the fundamental truths of art, and not accept other people's

BERNICE AND AGATHA

opinions. That is the one great error of the superficial dilettante. He is a parrot. He does not trust his own judgment. He learns the names of painters, and sculptors, and poets, and composers. He talks learnedly of schools, and technique, and colour, and composition. He looks down upon the man less learned than he. And all the time he misses the great truth. He goes to the opera, and if the opera has been pronounced great, he accepts it as such and deceives himself into thinking that he enjoys it. He raves over a monotone reproduction of some old master, and would scorn the criticism of a layman who found fault with the drawing, when the truth is that the original graced the wall of a cathedral, sixty feet in the air, and was loved because it was a masterpiece of colour. Dilettant-

THE RICHER LIFE

ism is generally a self-deception and a curse.

And that really explains the *raison d'être* of the scoffer. Honest man, he hates the insincerity of all this superficial patter. But there he stops. Because the gusher has learned it all wrong, the scoffer considers it not worth learning at all.

If anything, I believe the ignoramus is worse than the dilettante. Let him consider a moment. How would he like to live in an artless world? Suppose there were no pictures. Suppose architecture were all based on the utilitarianism of the boiler shop or the chicken coop. Suppose there were no music. Surely art has its place. He must admit that some artistic creations give him pleasure. Then why not follow that lead and get more

BERNICE AND AGATHA

pleasure? There are more beautiful things to be brought to his soul's attention than he has ever dreamt of in his philosophy.

That is the true, sane reason for studying art. Such a study certainly does open new vistas to the soul. By taking thought we can discover new and deeper beauties, and a beauty discovered is a morsel for the soul. The study of art on that basis is worth while. The study of art simply to make one seem accomplished or learned is despicable, like all other social pretenses. The sham art lover is not helping his soul a bit, and the worst of it is he very likely doesn't realize that he is shamming.

It comes down to this, that neither the gusher nor the scoffer knows enough about the true meaning of art. Complete enjoyment of works

THE RICHER LIFE

of art, and the fullest benefit to be derived therefrom, depend upon understanding and genuine appreciation, and these come from study based upon a fundamental conception of the real meaning of art and beauty.

Now, by the study of art I do not mean courses in an art school, or wide reading on art subjects. I do not mean familiarity with names or the ability to classify types. If I did, there would be but small hope for the busy worker to whom circumstances have denied the time to indulge in these things. There are beautiful things and ugly things on every hand. The processes of reproduction have been so perfected that the poorest of us need not be without pictures. But this same ease of reproduction has poured in upon us an ocean of pic-

BERNICE AND AGATHA

tures that are as far from art as the east is from the west. We must study into the truth of this matter and train the sense of observation and discrimination.

In this commercial age men have builded ugly temples to Mammon, which smite the eye in every city; but here and there has arisen a man like Stanford White, whose perfect sense of proportion and ability to visualize results have given us buildings whose beauty is a joy forever. We need not go to the Old World to see beauty in architecture. Good music, too, is not denied us, and we have always at hand the soul-satisfying charm of good books — true poetry and smooth-running prose — if we will but lay down the latest novel and dip into them. And then there are the homes we live in — houses and gardens. Here

THE RICHER LIFE

we may create beauty with our own hands. Here we may learn the value of simplicity and restraint, as the Greeks learned it long ago. Yes, there is art enough and to spare for the poorest of us, but we shut our eyes to it and scorn it, either because we fancy that it is not worthy of our exalted intellects, or because we consider the whole thing fol-de-rol. There is a means ready at hand whereby hungry and oppressed souls may find release and enrichment by opening the mind to the real meaning of beauty in art.

We are just workers, you and I, in the factory of the world. We have but little time to take a finishing course in art; we have more important matters to attend to. We are busy making money, or acquiring some other temporal bene-

BERNICE AND AGATHA

fit. But what shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul, or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? So let us think of the needs of our souls now and then. Let us not starve them. Let us feast our eyes, when we can, upon beauty in nature and art. When next we pass down the city street, let us raise our eyes from the shop windows and see if there be not some beauty somewhere.

Let those gush who will; let them scoff who will. We can afford to smile indulgently at those long-haired, be-sandaled ones who prate ravishingly of Ibsen and Whistler, and whose souls are as vigorous as a chocolate cream. We can afford to pity those who pass along the narrow rut and glean their spiritual nourishment from the

THE RICHER LIFE

Sunday paper. But you and I are truth seekers, and if there be any virtue in art, if there be in it any power to raise our spiritual selves to a higher plane of development, we mean to seek and find it.



The Story of Ching Wong



ONCE upon a time, ever so long ago, there lived in China a little, weazened-up yellow man. It was in the Ming dynasty, whenever that was. My book says thirteen hundred and sixty-eight to sixteen hundred and forty-four. Like most of us in nineteen hundred and eleven, his chief occupation was earning enough cash to buy enough rice and fish to nourish his

THE RICHER LIFE

shrivelled little body sufficiently to make it possible for him to earn more cash to buy more rice and fish, and so on, *ad infinitum*. His name was Ching, or Wong, or Ching Wong, or whatever outlandish name you will. Somewhere in Ching's disgusting little body there slumbered a soul about as big as one grain of mustard seed. It was an untroublesome soul that let him beat his wife and do many vile things. Ching's possession of a soul was not in itself remarkable. Most of us have them — much like Ching's. But one day Ching's soul woke up! Ching earned the cash for his rice and fish by making pots for other people to cook rice and fish in. He made the pots good enough to sell for cash, and no better. Why should he? It would not be prudent to make them so well that they

THE STORY OF CHING WONG

would never break, for then, by and by, his occupation would be gone, and how would he get rice and fish then? And it really didn't matter if they did happen to be scratched and uneven. Folks simply wanted pots that would hold water and not crack in the fire.

But one day Ching conceived the idea of making an especially good pot. It was his soul that told him to do it, but he didn't know that. So he made a good pot. It was a very good pot, indeed. It was round and smooth and graceful. He spoiled many pots in making it, and wasted much valuable time, but he didn't care. When the good pot was done he didn't try to sell it, but cleaned a place for it on the shelf and sat and looked at it. It pleased him greatly, and as he sat

THE RICHER LIFE

and admired it his soul grew — just a little bit.

After awhile the good pot ceased to satisfy Ching's soul, and it clamoured for another. So Ching made another good pot, better than the first. Then he made other good pots, and soon he made all his pots good pots, even though they brought no more cash. It pleased him to know that he could make good pots. One day Ching saw a piece of glazed pottery with blossoms in it in a mandarin's window. It was green, shiny, and very delicate and beautiful. After that his soul troubled him a great deal. Finally he could stand it no longer, and he journeyed to the big town, where he paid a skilled potter much cash to teach him how to make delicate, coloured pots with glazed surfaces. Then he went home, and whenever he found time

THE STORY OF CHING WONG

he made delicate vessels with coloured, glazed surfaces. These he did not sell, but put them on his shelf and gazed at them when he was tired.

By and by he found himself desiring to make something even more beautiful, and he set forth again to learn what the ages had taught men about making porcelain.

Finally the great inspiration of Ching Wong's life came to him. He resolved to make a vase that should be a perfect vase—the most beautiful vase that had ever been made. He made and destroyed dozens before he found a shape that should satisfy his soul. Then he made and destroyed many more before he hit upon just the soft sky-blue tint that he wanted. At last it was done. It was a very small vase, but it was the most

THE RICHER LIFE

beautiful vase that had ever been made. He had put the whole of his little mustard-seed soul into it. Then he sent it as a gift to the emperor.

Whether Ching died happy after he had made his vase, or lived to a drivelling old age, really does not matter. The vase has lasted for hundreds of years, and now stands on a little teakwood pedestal in the cabinet of a wealthy collector, and is gazed at and admired by many people who do not understand, and by a few who do.

CHING WONG was one of the world's craftsmen. He was as much a craftsman, in his way, as Michaelangelo; for craftsmanship is not confined to any one age nor to any one people. It is eternal and universal. It was a human attribute

THE STORY OF CHING WONG

in the days of Tubal-Cain. Craftsmanship is the realization of art for art's sake; only that phrase has been worn threadbare until it hardly serves to cover the nakedness of shiftless bohemianism.

The reward of craftsmanship is the satisfaction of the soul in the completion of a perfect thing, whether it be a chair or a cathedral, a sentence or an epic. Craftsmanship is one of the rarest of human virtues in its perfection, and one of the oldest and commonest in germ. True craftsmen are rare, but most of us are potential craftsmen without knowing it. Our souls haven't fully waked up. For craftsmanship is not confined to the making of pots and pictures; it extends throughout the whole range of the world's activities, wherever human creative force is at work. Wherever the

THE RICHER LIFE

creative faculty is exercised for its own sake with a high ideal — there is craftsmanship.

There is no higher ideal than that of the craftsman, for it is the soul speaking; it is the divine spark in us. God, indeed, is the greatest craftsman of all. In fact, so far as we may reason from what we see, craftsmanship is His chief attribute. Love, mercy, justice, wrath, — these things we have guessed at. All we have evidence of is craftsmanship. Look about you — look at the curve of a mountain range; at white clouds and blue sky, at a clump of purple asters and golden-rod, at a chipmunk's tail, at a pine tree against the winter sunset, at the flash of the sun on a mountain brook. Isn't it a bit presumptuous to suppose that these things were made for our pleasure alone?

THE STORY OF CHING WONG

“And the earth brought forth grass, and the herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind; and God saw that it was good.”

I do not mean to be irreverent. The noblest conception we have of God is as the Creator — which means Craftsman. Why does the spider weave that wonderful gossamer wheel of his so beautifully? I am inclined to think he has a bit of divine soul in him rather more, perhaps, than a miser or a seducer. It is craftsmanship, then, that our souls are blindly groping for, whether we be empire builders or dressmakers. To make something worth making, and to make it as nearly perfect as possible, is craftsmanship. Thus a good cobbler is more Godlike than a poor preacher. I fancy that Jesus of Nazareth was a good carpenter,

THE RICHER LIFE

and Saul of Tarsus a good maker of tents.

It is craftsmanship that constitutes the difference between a statesman and a politician. One builds; the other manipulates. It is the lack of craftsmanship in our modern financiers that makes us distrust them, just as we distrust petty barterers; they do all for profit, nothing for accomplishment. It is the lack of craftsmanship that makes mere social prominence seem empty to thinking men and women.

It is the apparent lack of craftsmanship in the capitalist that antagonizes the workman. I say apparent, for I believe there are plenty of capitalists who are craftsmen, and the sooner we folk of different occupations and degrees of wealth come to recognize the spirit of craftsmanship in one another, the sooner

THE STORY OF CHING WONG

we shall come to understand each other, and the sooner class warfare will cease. The socialist says this understanding can come only through a levelling process — either violently revolutionary, or quietly evolutionary. I am not sure of that. I am inclined to think that this better understanding will come about through hidden channels of which the reformer and the single taxer and the socialist take little cognizance. I believe there is yet a more glorious day for individualism, for craftsmanship is an attribute of individuals, not of masses. That was Herbert Spencer's belief — that human progress comes through the activities of the world's chosen few — that is, the great craftsmen.

All through the ages, the evolutionists tell us, the soul germ has

THE RICHER LIFE

been pushing steadily upward toward the light. In the ant and the bee it has reached a high stage of development. Almost they are craftsmen. It is in man, however, that the highest point of development has been reached. He has a soul, we say. He aspires to more than food and drink. He must needs scratch likenesses of beasts on his cave walls, or he must be making gardens.

I am optimistic enough to hope that this development has not yet reached its highest point, but that the divine spark in us will burst forth again and yet again in immortal flame; and men of genius will come when we need them most, to point the way, give us fresh ideals, teach us new craftsmanship.

Cultivate the ideal of craftsmanship, and you will be making progress

THE STORY OF CHING WONG

toward your own personal happiness. Compel yourself to understand the meaning of craftsmanship, place your mind in sympathy with it, and by that act of will you will be tapping an unlimited reservoir of unsuspected joy and peace.

This sounds like academic psychology, I grant you, or New Thought, or Brahminism, or Christian Science — or nonsense. It is good, sound sense, for all that. This joining the cult of craftsmanship requires no sacrifice of material comforts. You don't have to starve for art's sake. You aren't obliged to become "queer," and so alienate yourself from the companionship and sympathy of every-day folks. No public confession of faith is required. You can take the ideal of craftsmanship to your heart and keep it hidden, if you choose. It need not inter-

THE RICHER LIFE

fere with your day's work; rather, it will glorify the day's work and make sordid tasks seem worth while. I know a man who has made his mark in the world as an apple grower. He is materially successful; by study and personal attention he has made as much as one thousand dollars in a season from one extraordinary acre. He is an expert; he receives one hundred dollars from wealthy "gentleman farmers" for a single day's advice and supervision. He is much in demand as a lecturer on soils, cover crops, grafting, fertilizing, spraying, pruning, making new varieties, and all the rest of it. He is proud of his career. And yet it is not that which makes him a happy, sweet-minded old gentleman. It is the fact that he has grown the biggest, reddest, spiciest apples that have

THE STORY OF CHING WONG

ever been produced in the state of New York. He gloats over his apples as Ching Wong gloated over his good pots. He has made no sacrifice of material comforts; he has not brought privation to wife or children; and yet he has satisfied his soul as some of our captains of finance cannot possibly have satisfied theirs. He is a craftsman in apples.

We are most of us craftsmen in some material or other — some in pots, some in apples, some in marble, some in pie crust, “Some with massive deeds and great, some with ornaments of rhyme.” We must work, whether or no. Shall our work make us happy or miserable?

We are workers, you and I, and our compensation is, for the most part, inadequate. How keenly that fact tortures us at times! We work

THE RICHER LIFE

to make others rich, and we deserve appreciation which we do not get. In the ideal of craftsmanship alone may we find due compensation. Do your work well, and your own soul will not fail to praise you. It will be the God in you saying, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant." External appreciation is pleasant, but in the end it is hollow and ephemeral. Self-realization and self-satisfaction are the permanent, valuable rewards. I can imagine that Robinson Crusoe on his desert island had his happy moments. The mediæval monk in his cell wrought wonderfully for the delectation of his own soul. Longfellow saw this vision when he wrote "The Builders," and Kipling, when he wrote "L'Envoi" in "The Seven Seas."

That's all very well, you say, for

THE STORY OF CHING WONG

one with the artistic temperament. Young Rodin nearly starved in the name of craftsmanship, but he was an artist. I am merely a worker, and I dislike to starve. I inhabit a world of cold, hard facts, not dreams.

You are wrong, brother. You are an artist, too, just as Ching Wong was when he made his ugly pots. Perhaps your soul hasn't waked up yet. You are still working for cash with which to buy rice and fish. That's your trouble — not circumstances.

Take courage, weary toiler. It may be that your youthful dreams never will be realized. Perhaps there is no pot of gold at the end of the rainbow for you. But the rainbow is there — a vastly more wonderful and beautiful thing. Commune with your own soul; you will find

THE RICHER LIFE

it jolly company. Open the windows and let in God's sunlight. Then make something that you know is good. Give your soul a chance.



The Prince, The Pauper and The Golden Mean

ONCE upon a time there lived a prince who was very fortunate and very unhappy. He was the son of a king who, when he himself was a king's son, had married a goose-girl after a romantic wooing, and the prince inherited certain tastes and mental twists from his mother that proved to be most upsetting.

The prince was heir to a great kingdom and vast riches. One day he would don the ermine,

THE RICHER LIFE

grasp the sceptre, and mount the golden throne where he would sit in state, surrounded by his counsellors, and receive the homage of subjects and ambassadors. But he had a plough-boy's heart in his breast, and he was unhappy.

The prince was young and strong and handsome. His people loved him. In prowess with arms and skill in horsemanship he surpassed all the young men of the realm. But he liked not the royal forest and the jousting field. He had a gypsy heart in him, and he longed for the open road and the wide world.

The prince was betrothed to a princess of a neighbouring kingdom. She was tall and fair as a lily, and her hair was like spun gold. She was so virtuous that the witch under the hill had never discovered a flaw in her character. The two kings

THE PRINCE AND THE PAUPER

had arranged the match, and the prince had no rival. But he had a troubadour's heart in him, and he was unhappy.

At length he became so dissatisfied with his lot that he determined to set forth alone to see the world. Saddling his white mare one night, he muffled her feet and stole from the city. When the morning sun struck the plume on his hat he was far from the gates, and the dew was glistening on strange fields.

As he rode along he heard singing, and soon he overtook a ragged vagabond.

"Why do you sing?" asked the prince.

"Why does the lark sing?" responded the vagabond. "I have no care resting on my heart, and so the songs must needs come forth."

"How did you lose your care?"

THE RICHER LIFE

asked the prince, dismounting from his white mare and walking by the vagabond's side.

"I never had any," he replied. "I have no home, no wife, no money, no duties, no destiny. Nothing is expected of me. No one loves me, and no one hates me. I have no thought but for one day at a time, and at night I sleep because I am tired. What is care?"

"I don't know," replied the prince, thoughtfully, "but I have it. You are wise, I see. How can I get rid of my care?"

"Change places with me," replied the vagabond. "Give me your horse and your plumed hat and your silken doubtlet and your well-filled purse; and take my shirt and staff and old shoes. Take my joy, and give me your care. I would like to know how it seems; I will make

THE PRINCE AND THE PAUPER

a rare adventure of it." And he laughed heartily.

So the prince gave him his sword and doublet and purse, and set out on the road afoot, seeking happiness. When the prince's absence was discovered at the palace a great hue and cry were set up, but the prince could not be found. The king ordered his royal charger, and with his trusted knights set out in search of his son, but to no avail. After forty days they gave him up for lost. When a year had rolled by the prince returned, footsore and battered, a sorry-looking beggar, and applied for admission at the palace gates. They drove him away thrice, but he persisted. Then they brought the dogs to set them on him. But the prince's faithful hound knew him, and leaped joyfully upon him, licking his hands.

THE RICHER LIFE

Then the prince showed the old gatekeeper the birthmark on his left shoulder, just the size and shape and colour of a ripe strawberry, and desired that the queen be told of it. Doubtfully, the gatekeeper sent a messenger to tell the queen mother, who came rushing out in all her purple robes and threw herself weeping on the prince's neck.

So they made a great feast, for the prince had come back to his own. But soon the prince was unhappy again, and one day he summoned his father's oldest and wisest counsellor.

"Why am I unhappy?" he asked. "I gave away my purse and my sword and my good white mare, but I got no joy in return. The stones hurt my feet, and the food I got sickened me. I met with dirty people who drove me from their

THE PRINCE AND THE PAUPER

low doors. And so I came back again. Now I am as I was before; why am I not happy?"

The wiseacre thought a long time, and then he answered.

"You are half prince and half peasant," quoth he. "If you are very rich the peasant in you is unhappy; if you are very poor the prince in you suffers. You must seek a golden mean. Your father loves you, and will give you whatever you wish. Ask him for a hill and a valley in the outskirts of his kingdom. Ask him for flocks and herds and honest peasants to tend them. Go there to live as the ruler of a little rural kingdom. Ask not for gold or for a court, only for those necessities which the royal part of you must have, and not for the things which a shepherd is happier without."

THE RICHER LIFE

But the prince scorned this advice. Such a life was too tame for his young blood. He was loath to give up again the luxuries to which he had been born. He did not know that they and care were the same. So, shaking his head sadly, he turned away.

LET us give heed to the parable. Most of us either are princes or are trying to be. We are working to heap up for ourselves treasures on earth, and the labour of it is killing us. We become so entangled in the process that we even forget what we are working for. We think we are working for a future happiness; we believe we are climbing toward a heaven of joy and repose, and we are only piling an Ossa on a Pelion of care. Sooner or later we realize this, every one of us. To some the

THE PRINCE AND THE PAUPER

realization comes too late. We have grown too old, or have become too inalienably devoted to the false quest. We have formed a habit that we think we cannot break.

But for most of us it is never too late, if we will but think so. Don't you believe it? Have you despaired of ever finding release from the enthrallment that you have cast about yourself? Listen!

We must brush away the cobwebs and get down to first principles. In this world we must work to live. Even if we are born to the purple, we must work to live adequately. A worthless life is a desecration. Nature abhors a drone.

Now, then, what are we living and working for? To gain happiness? To render service? Both, I submit. Carlyle called blessedness the chief end of man, and he meant

THE RICHER LIFE

that highest form of happiness that comes indirectly through service rather than through self-seeking. It is self-realization brought about through the enlargement and outspreading of self to include those things one loves and cares for. And the happiest man is he who has the largest circle of loves and interests all intimately connected with himself. You will find all that in the Spencian philosophy.

But it is a sort of selfishness, after all. If we are candid we must admit that. History is the record of the human attempt to become happier, with a constant increase and elevation in the requirements of happiness.

Let us say, then, that we are living and working to become happier, and let us not lose sight of it. Then we are not living and working for

THE 'PRINCE AND THE PAUPER

money, are we? Of course not! Perish the thought! We are not of that sordid clan, you and I! We work for money simply as a means to an end. We earn money for its power to purchase happiness in the form in which we desire it most. Money is but a medium of exchange.

Work, money, happiness — that is the cycle.

And that is just where we are prone to go astray. Simple as the formula is, we become mired before we wallow through it. The more money we can earn, we say, the more happiness we can get. So, fixing our eyes on the nearer goal, we work for money and for the visible indications of its possession. We err here, every mother's son and daughter of us, to a greater or less extent. "Just a little more money,"

THE RICHER LIFE

we say, "and then, ho! for happiness." And we seldom get beyond the first step.

Now the point I want to make is this: We have built up this three-part cycle logically enough, and then we set it up as a graven image and worship it, forgetful of its true significance. And in so doing we have complicated life and enthroned the complication. What we must do, sooner or later, is to simplify life. And the only way to do that is to eliminate as far as possible the middle member of the cycle, and work directly for happiness — the highest form of happiness that our natures will permit. Money is but a medium of exchange, and the less we make of the medium the simpler life will become.

I need not argue that we want life simpler. I think we have all come

THE PRINCE AND THE PAUPER

to feel that. The way the public, a few years ago, bought and read Charles Wagner's book was evidence of it. A thousand pities that he was so academic and so vague in his practical applications. The question is, How can we reduce life to simpler terms, and so give our souls the chance to contemplate the beauty of life for a little space before we go? Now that the high cost of living has become such a vital question, especially to those of us who live in cities, I find more and more people turning their faces countryward. There the cost of living is less. There life is simpler. There the medium of exchange dominates life less completely. Every fifth man I meet is talking more or less definitely of buying a farm, and some of them really mean it. And heaven knows, we need more and better farmers.

THE RICHER LIFE

And they are on the right track, too. Until some of us get out of town, the town will be too full. We can't all go, but some of us must, and I believe we who go will be the lucky ones. Something must be done to relieve the tension. Young men are filling the agricultural colleges, which are spreading education and uplift throughout the rural districts. It is a sign of the times, and one of the things that makes me optimistic in the face of imminent sociological and industrial upheaval. When the storm breaks, these educated American farmers are going to be the ballast in the ship of state. You'll see!

But for us it is an individual question, and it is the individual, here and there, that is leaving the slavery of the shop and the office for the liberty of broad acres. "Back to

THE PRINCE AND THE PAUPER

the land" has become a fixed phrase in our language, and many a Rome-weary Horace is in search of a Sabine farm.

Now comes the danger. The prince steals forth from his palace and takes up his life of vagabondage. Whither will it lead him? Through mountain waste and deep morass, unquestionably. We must not be too hasty. We must seek a golden mean. I have heard lately of several people who have steeled their hearts and cut loose from the city, and they have come to regret it. They have embarked on a new enterprise ill prepared. No man would be so foolish as to open a drug store or start a newspaper with so little training and capital. So these would-be farmers, and their poor wives, pass through a period of real hardship, for which they are not

THE RICHER LIFE

at all fitted, and they are glad enough to get back again to the old bondage of the palace.

I find that the back-to-the-land movement has already received a setback from this cause, and the wisest of us hesitate to give away our swords and our purses and our good white mares. We have seen farms and farmers. We dislike the barnyard. Noisome boots and overalls in the dining-room spoil our appetite for breakfast. We dislike to wash at the kitchen sink. Better five rooms and a bath in the Bronx, say we, than a cold and lonely farm house at Podunk. And so we give up the dream and go back to our more or less suicidal jobs in town.

I contend that these hardships are not necessary, and that is the burden of my song. Whatsoever is good,

THE PRINCE AND THE PAUPER

whatsoever is uplifting, whatsoever is sanitary in city life, you can take these with you to the farm. In seeking the simple life you must cast off the artificialities of life, but you need not abandon its refinements. There is nothing complex or complicating about culture. A stable and a bath room are not inherently incompatible. By taking thought, you can save yourself and your city-bred wife much suffering, and perhaps avoid a failure of the whole plan.

I know people who have gone back to the farm and who have degenerated. I know some who are passing through a purgatory of discomfort and hardship. I know some who have utterly failed with the whole thing. But I know some, too, who are succeeding, and I mean, some day, to be one of them. They

THE RICHER LIFE

have been prudent. They have not set forth without a loaf in their knapsacks. They have not expected too much. They have been prepared to work — not for money, but for happiness, appetite, and blessed sleep. They have not mistaken a new kind of bondage for freedom.

If you have no money at all, you must fight it out somehow, whether in country or in town. But if you have just a little — just a very little — you can make it amount to something in the country. An income of five hundred dollars a year is a drop in the bucket in New York; it is a fortune in the village of Farmingtown. You can buy a farm that will give you a living, and your sons after you, for the price of an automobile that will be scrap-iron in six years.

THE PRINCE AND THE PAUPER

And I for one prefer the farm. To stand on your own hill top, looking across your own orchard and meadow, with your own grain green-ing in the July sun, with your own cattle standing knee-deep in your own brook, with your wife singing in the kitchen of the little farm house that is your home—that is the simple life that satisfies! Joy-riding on Long Island isn't to be compared with the rattle of the buggy wheels when Old Dobbin goes to town.

And when winter comes, and the stubble-fields lie sleeping beneath their white mantle, there is time for books, and talk, and ear old friends. And best of all, you needn't be marooned among a lot of ignorant, hard-shelled, vulgar hayseeds. The city is sending its best back to the land, and you'll find others like yourself at Farmingtown.

THE RICHER LIFE

Time and room to think, to enjoy, to live! Don't you hunger and thirst for it? Can the quest for gold be compared with it?

An old chap named Abraham Cowley, away back in the time of Cromwell and Milton, said some very sensible things on this very subject. He cut loose from the city and found the simple life; and for those who, like Cowley, long for a time and room to cultivate their own minds as well as their own fields, a quotation may be permissible.

Says the genial sage: "Since nature denies to most men the capacity or appetite, and fortune allows but to a very few the opportunities or possibility, of applying themselves wholly to philosophy, the best mixture of human affairs that we can make is the employments of a country life."

THE PRINCE AND THE PAUPER

And yet I know that many, like the prince in the parable, will read these words and turn sadly or scornfully away.



The Doctor and the Cobbler's Son



ONCE upon a time there lived a learned doctor. He was a Doctor of Medicine, and a Doctor of Philosophy, and a Doctor of Laws, and I don't know what else. He was renowned throughout all Europe for his vast learning, and in some quarters he was thought to be a wizard. He could make water turn to blood; he could name the stars and foretell an eclipse; he could read books written in strange

THE COBBLER'S SON

tongues. Some folk believed he could turn dross into gold if he would. I don't know where there has lived so learned a man before or since.

To the doctor's laboratory one day came Hans, the cobbler, and his son Fritz.

"Learned doctor," quoth Hans, who was a man of few words, "I bring my son Fritz to ask if thou wilt make a scholar of him."

The doctor looked at the big, tanned fellow and smiled.

"Dost want to become a scholar?" he asked.

But Fritz only twirled his cap and stared, and answered never a word.

"Nay," said Hans, sadly, "he desires not to be a scholar."

"Hath he no skill with tools?" asked the doctor.

"Oh, yes," answered the cobbler, "he hath skill."

THE RICHER LIFE

“Then why not make a cobbler of him? The world needs good cobblers more than it needs poor scholars.”

“I have tried,” answered Hans, “but he will not work at my trade. He must needs be ever running about the country, poking his head into all sorts of out-of-the-way places, and learning nothing of any value to himself or to me. If thou wouldst take him here, he would do thy bidding for fear of thy displeasure, and he might become a scholar after all. I can do nothing with him.”

So the doctor took Fritz aside and questioned him, but could not discover that the lad possessed more than half a man’s wits.

“I fear,” said he to the father, at length, “that I cannot make a scholar of thy son. He cannot even read, save with great labour.”

THE COBBLER'S SON

“Then let him be thy servant,” pleaded the father. “He shall fetch thy wood and sweep thy floors and wash thy vessels. He can do these things handily. Perchance he will learn a thing or two in a year. I will buy his food and clothing. He need be paid nothing.”

The doctor was not an unkind man, and he looked with favour upon the lad's broad back and strong hands. “Very well,” he said at length, “I will take him, but I will not promise to teach him anything.”

So the old cobbler departed well content, and Fritz took up his duties in the doctor's house.

For a year he cared for the doctor's laboratory and books, and his fear of his master's displeasure kept him at his work, though often his gaze would steal out of the window to follow the flight of some meadow

THE RICHER LIFE

lark, and when the wind blew over the hills his heart went with it. He was cleanly and careful, and a model servant, but in all the year he learned none of the doctor's wisdom. Books meant nothing to him, and the retorts and test tubes and furnaces were but so many silly toys. The doctor soon despaired of teaching the lad anything, and came to look upon him almost as one of the dumb animals.

When the year was up the doctor prepared to go on a long journey, and he sent Fritz back to his father. But the old cobbler would have none of him, and brought him again to the doctor's house.

"Pray keep him another year," pleaded Hans. "Perchance he is just beginning to learn."

"But I am about to go on a long journey," protested the doctor.

THE COBBLER'S SON

“Take him with thee,” said Hans. “He will carry thy goods and chattels, and serve thee at the inns and on the way.”

So at last the doctor consented, and in due time he and Fritz set out upon their journey.

After they had been gone many days, they were passing through a dense wood one afternoon when they were set upon by robbers, who took away their horses, stole the doctor's purse, stripped them of all their possessions, and left them alone in the wood.

Then it was that great fear came upon the learned doctor — fear and perplexity. Deprived of his black cloak, he shivered in the wind. The nearest town was miles away, and they had no horses.

“What shall we do, my master?” asked Fritz.

THE RICHER LIFE

But the doctor only shuddered, and cast frightened glances over his shoulder. In all his learning he found no power to cope with this situation. All his riches availed him nothing now, and fame reaches not to the heart of a lonely wood.

Finally Fritz began to lose patience. He could not understand the doctor's indecision.

"Come," said he: "shall we not set out toward the town? We will perish if we remain here."

The doctor answered never a word, but when Fritz led the way he followed. He had no idea of his whereabouts, he had become so confused in the scuffle, but Fritz glanced at the setting sun and set forth directly.

Presently he heard the doctor giving forth little moans, and, turning, he beheld him limping painfully.

THE COBBLER'S SON

The robbers had stolen the doctor's riding boots with their silver spurs. When the robbers had set upon them Fritz had hastily concealed his knife; this he now drew forth. Seeking out a certain tree, he stripped it of bark; then he found pliant, thong-like roots at the foot of a certain shrub, and with these he deftly fashioned rude shoes which he bound upon his master's feet.

By and by they became hungry, but their wallets were gone, and they had nothing to eat. Fritz bade his master rest upon a fallen tree, and turned off into the forest. After a little time he returned with his cap full of berries, and a pocket full of roots and herbs that were good to eat, and clear spring water in a vessel fashioned of bark. The doctor fell upon the food greedily, and soon assuaged hunger and thirst.

THE RICHER LIFE

The moon came up early, and Fritz led the way briskly along the dimly lighted path. But the doctor was not accustomed to this mode of travel, and at last he sank down exhausted. There was nothing to do but to spend the night in the woods, and the air was frosty. So Fritz made for them a bed of boughs and a coverlet of leaves, and the doctor laid him down to sleep.

But Fritz knew there would be wild beasts prowling about, so he set himself the task of making a fire. After a long search he found a flinty stone and a handful of dry bark fibre. By striking sparks from the stone with the blade of his knife he at last kindled a fire, and, piling it high with fagots, he lay down beside the doctor.

In the morning Fritz fetched more food and water, and they set forth

THE COBBLER'S SON

again. After a long and toilsome march they at last came out upon the highway, and a passing farmer took them to town in his cart.

When finally the doctor reached the house of his friends he once more became the master and Fritz the servant; but the lad would have no more of it.

“I care not for thy learning, sir,” quoth he. “Do none of thy books teach thee to find food or make fire? Surely these are the first things for a man to know. I will hie me back to the house of my father.”

So saying, he started off down the road singing — the witless knave — with never a penny in his purse.

It is easy to misconstrue the moral of this tale. There are not a few people nowadays who, preaching the gospel of the simple life, are riding their

THE RICHER LIFE

hobby too fast and too far. Time was when each family was dependent upon its own efforts and the fruitfulness of the soil for food, raiment, and all the necessities of life. Country folk raised their own wool and wove it into clothing for themselves. They grew their own wheat, ground it, and made it into bread. There was much to be desired in that life. It made for self-reliance, sturdiness of character, redness of blood, keenness of eye, skill with the hands, readiness of wit. But it was not all ideal.

It is well that society has become better organized. It is well that we have grown richer in the comforts of life. It is well for the weak that the strong must help them. It is a mistake to seek the path back to savagery.

We have gone too far, however,

THE COBBLER'S SON

and there is a reaction apparent on every hand. It is a wholesome, salutary thing, this turning of the face back toward primitive simplicity. Only we should take care not to let the pendulum swing too far in the other direction.

The trend of modern life — the specialized career, the life of cities — is at once narrowing and complicating. Hence the movement back to the farm, and its simpler, broader life. We are coming to believe that only with life near the soil and the sources of things can come true independence, and there are still some of us who thirst for liberty. Only before we cut loose we must be sure that we are not acting on blind impulse; we must understand the situation.

We have become educated now to things that our fathers cheerfully

THE RICHER LIFE

did without. Our needs are partly the same, partly different. To transplant us bodily into colonial New England would mean a sad awakening for many of us.

We are better off without wealth and enervating luxury. We do not need costly furnishings in our homes. We do not need half the things we have. But we do need time and opportunity for culture; we need good food; we need comfortable beds; we need sanitary plumbing; we need warm houses; we need some of the refinements of life; we need neighbours who live as we do.

These things, however, do not destroy the simplicity of life. Rather, they give us the opportunity to make life richer and better. We do not want to degenerate; we merely want to choose our own line of progress, and not have it all mapped

THE COBBLER'S SON

out for us and restricted by the conditions of commercial and city life. Grant me these things, and I am with you, heart and soul, in the journey back to the land and the quest for the simple life.

I want to make my position clearly understood on this point, lest I be accused of making a hero of Fritz. He was more or less of a worthless booby, after all. One is not often lost in the woods and in the progress of civilization one doctor is worth a hundred Fritzes. But Fritz didn't need to be such an ignoramus, and the doctor didn't need to be such a worthless nincompoop in an emergency. Let us be doctors if we will; our ambition is sure to lead us in that direction. But if we neglect the Fritz side of us we are deliberately narrowing our lives and dwarfing our souls.

THE RICHER LIFE

Now one thing that country life does for a man or a woman, and especially for a boy or a girl, is to train the natural, God-given faculties and make life better worth the living. There are plenty of successful business men to-day who couldn't for the life of them plant a row of corn, or build a fire of wet wood, or put up a creditable shelf in the pantry.

They are like our great lummux of a cat. We put him in a closet with a mouse the other day, and he simply sat and stared at it. He's an affectionate fellow and a fine parlour ornament, but his economic value is minus. I fear he would starve if shut up in a barn full of mice.

That is why fewer men retire from business than formerly. Not only are they not satisfied with a com-

THE COBBLER'S SON

petence, but their intellectual resources are often quite undeveloped. Take them away from their desks, and they are at a loss what to do with themselves. At the age of fifty they have learned but one way to use eyes, hands, and brain. Take them out of their little rut and they are like the doctor in the woods. What a commentary on modern life, that a man is as dependent upon business as an opium fiend upon his drug! As for the society woman, the club man, the mere pleasure seeker, their cases are not worth our consideration.

And it shows in the children, too — pretty, little, well-mannered, well-dressed ladies and gentlemen, growing up in the midst of an artificial civilization that makes them as self-reliant as hothouse roses. For the sake of the children, if for no

THE RICHER LIFE

other reason, give heed to the parable of the doctor and Fritz.

In fact, it's very largely an educational question. Your modern business man has been brought up to the life he leads. Give the boys and girls a chance to learn something besides compound interest and penmanship. Manual training is a good thing; I am inclined to think it should be put near the head of the list. It teaches a boy that his hands are useful.

Elbert Hubbard said the other day, in his topsy-turvy way, that if the rest of mankind didn't adopt the educational methods of Tuskegee, we would soon find ourselves working for the coloured race; and there's an element of truth in it. It is well for the king's son to learn a trade. But better than Tuskegee, or manual training, or any of the systems,

THE COBBLER'S SON

is the natural education that comes from spending the play time of life where children are thrown on their own resources to a large extent. The country boy unquestionably learns many things that are a closed book to his city cousin.

I do not advise any man or woman to cut loose hastily from long-established habits and the comforts of city life. Country life is not a panacea. There are plenty of unhappy people living in the country. But for many who are discontented with the thralldom of the office, who are fretted by the constricting influence of city life, who feel within them stifled natural impulses struggling for expression, who hunger and thirst for greater liberty and the richer life, here may be found the way out.

For the activities and interests of

THE RICHER LIFE

country life do open the eyes and exercise the hands. Here are all the forces of nature to be daily observed. Here is work to be done—work for one's self and not for a corporation—a whole work and not a piece of work—work that shows results and that is its own justification and greatest joy—work that stimulates body and soul. In short, it seems to me, country life offers a better opportunity than city life for the functioning of the whole being.

Unhappiness often comes through our incapacity to cope with the unexpected problems of life as they arise, and any course of living which keeps all our senses and powers active, alert, and in training makes for happiness. Thus has the spirit of craftsmanship developed among men forced to earn their bread through skill with the hands, and

THE COBBLER'S SON

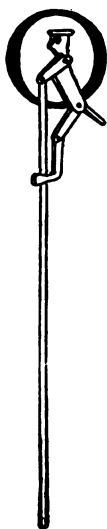
craftsmanship has always been a mighty power in the elevation of mankind.

The time may come when, voluntarily or involuntarily, you may be thrown on your own resources. You may be deprived of money, old occupations, old companions. With a mind still fresh and receptive, with eyes open to the multifold interests of the natural world, with hands trained to work, you need not degenerate into a malcontent, your soul need not dry up. And it is never too early or too late to begin the training.

To see with the eyes, to do with the hands, to understand with the heart, to reason with the mind, these the simpler and more primitive forms of life compel us to do, and in the doing of them we secure a more complete development, round out our souls, enrich our lives.



A Little Boy *and* Santa Claus



ONCE upon a time there was a little boy who believed in Santa Claus. Why he thus believed he did not know. When one is a small boy one finds it easier to believe in things than not. He did not inquire as to the reason for the good saint's existence. He did not wonder why Santa Claus should choose to be so

A BOY AND SANTA CLAUS

generous on one particular day. Cause and effect were matters of small importance compared with the net results of sleds and Noah's arks. When Christmas morning came, and the sunlight streaming in through frosted window panes woke the little boy, he made a dash for the mantel where his stocking was hung. There were the jumping-jacks and the Christmas candy, just where he knew they would be — irrefutable evidence of the midnight visit of the good white saint. Faith in things not seen is in little danger so long as the evidence of things hoped for fails us not. The whole situation suited the little boy, and he believed in Santa Claus.

But he was a very inquisitive small boy, and though the bigger mystery of Santa Claus troubled him not at all, he was a bit perplexed by cer-

THE RICHER LIFE

tain material details. He observed that there was no real fireplace in the house. A scientific turn of mind was his by inheritance, and forced him to pursue his investigations. At length he formulated the important question: How did Santa Claus get in? The grown-ups (they were unusually clever for grown-ups, it seems) told him that Santa Claus could make himself very small at will, and came in through the draughts of the kitchen range, after the fire went out. This proved a satisfactory solution of the problem for a time, as it did not occur to the small boy to inquire whether the grown-ups always allowed the fire to go out on the night before Christmas, though he was a bit puzzled as to how any saint, even a collapsible saint, could drag a large sled through a small stovepipe.

A BOY AND SANTA CLAUS

Alas! the small boy was born in a scientific and materialistic age, and the spirit of investigation was upon him. He could not let the matter drop. He made an exhaustive study of it, and one by one scented out the flaws in the argument. He took notice of the hesitation of the women grown-ups in answering his questions, and the false notes in the facetious remarks of the men grown-ups. He observed the smile of patronizing superiority on his older sister's face. He began to doubt, and doubt is the beginning of knowledge.

Before many years had passed he had run the question down, and the grown-ups, finding themselves cornered, were forced to admit that there was no such thing as Santa Claus.

I was that little boy. Ah, well I

THE RICHER LIFE

remember how it seemed that my heart would break when I learned the appalling truth. I left the unsympathetic company of obtuse grown-ups and threw myself down on the sofa in another room, and, turning my face to the wall, I wept bitterly. I had lost something that day that can never be replaced.

I AM not at all in sympathy with those who think it a sin to perpetuate what they are pleased to refer to as the Santa Claus lie. Personally, I must confess to a feeling of smallness and awe when I stand before a child who honestly believes in Santa Claus. And yet I fear that his hold upon us is weakening. The age of fable has passed; must old St. Nicholas go too? This growing scorn for delightful unrealities gives me some concern,

A BOY AND SANTA CLAUS

for it is an indication of a psychological change in the human race that I do not like to contemplate. One by one the myths of childhood vanish. Bogie-men and fairy god-mothers gradually lose their power over us. One by one the myths of man depart, and Pan lies low beneath our hurrying feet. We have put our faith in a god of gold and steel, and Phœbus no longer rides upon the sunset.

We are a practical people, and we glory in it. We waste not our energies in vain dreaming of things that may not be. We have risen above that foolishness. We are after tangible results, and we get them.

But, after all, are tangible results all that the soul craves? May we not be degenerating into mere men of prose and calculation? How long will there be among us real

THE RICHER LIFE

children and real poets? Where now is the poet who can invent a myth, or the child who can believe in one? "Alice in Wonderland," I believe, was the last great mythology. Even "Peter Pan" did not wholly convince us.

"We have played Jack Horner with our earth," says James Russell Lowell, lamenting in his "Journal," "till there is never a plum left in it," thereby implying, I presume, that each iconoclastic scientist saith in his stony heart, "Lo, what a brave boy am I!"

The best of our poets have felt alarm at this systematic and progressive disillusioning of the world. Thus Poe, to Science:

'Hast thou not dragged Diana from her car?
And driven the Hamadryad from the wood
To seek a shelter in some happier star?

A BOY AND SANTA CLAUS

Hast thou not torn the Naiad from the flood,
The Elfin from the green grass, and from me
The summer dream beneath the tamarind tree?"

And thus Wordsworth:

"I'd rather be

A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn;
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;
Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathed horn."

It is not the disbelief in these old myths that brings pain; it is the destruction of belief, the breaking down of the idols. It may be fun, but it is short-sighted and silly. I believe I would sooner perjure myself than be the one to tell a child that there is no such thing as Santa Claus. And if your brother believes in the power of prayer, you are a knave if you attempt to shatter his faith. This iconoclasm has gone far enough. Let us build us new idols

THE RICHER LIFE

if we can; at least let us destroy no more old ones.

And, speaking of Christmas, has it ever occurred to you that we may perhaps be doing ourselves and posterity immeasurable injury by forgetting the beauty of the Story that the day is supposed to commemorate? But we cannot hope to rebuild the faith of the world in myth and fairy lore. The day of miracles has passed. People don't read poetry any more. People don't pray any more. This is the age of specialization, and those of us who want our souls to grow must fight always against the tendency of our lives to narrow down to a single channel. For every man there lies a rut ready to receive him.

This is the trend of the times, and it will take patience and much united energy to combat it. The

A BOY AND SANTA CLAUS

task may be too big for us, but we may be able to do something to prevent our own lives from becoming entirely hardened. And that is what makes this thing worth talking about. The most materialistic old curmudgeon of us all sometimes looks back with regretful longing toward the fresh, unspoiled, unsophisticated, wondering days of childhood. Indeed, I fancy that some of our modern men and women have reason to indulge in some of this regretful retrospection from about the age of twelve. We envy our earlier selves, and we regret the loss of those very things that we have struggled so valiantly to grow away from. What is it that makes childhood so alluring? What is it in the old memories that haunts us? Why is it that those halcyon hours come never more?

THE RICHER LIFE

We have been growing old too fast. We have been losing that freshness of interest in all things, that mental alertness, that made us as children, that made earlier peoples, so different from what we are now. Until we regain, by an effort of the will, somewhat of this childlike spirit, we shall continue to plod along, with half of our minds working overtime and the other half asleep. For one thing, we live too much in cities these days. Cities are manufactured out of aterial ingredients. Their steel and concrete lives enchain our souls. Myths were never born in cities, but in groves and by the sea. It is there that the imagination is stimulated; there is no such thing as Pan in Wall Street.

Do you remember how you used to lie awake, after they had put you to

A BOY AND SANTA CLAUS

bed, and weave romances about yourself? Do you remember the countless Indians you slew when you were a little boy, or the fairy princes that came to woo you when you were a little girl? Now when you lie awake o' nights, you think of business, don't you? Have you ever made an effort to do otherwise? Have you ever tried to put that part of your mind to sleep by waking up the other part — the old child part that knew how to "pretend?" I have, and I tell you it pays. I have learned to turn my mind deliberately to a dream I have of a farm in Massachusetts, where I and One Other stand amid our blossoming apple trees and survey the land that is ours. The sound of a cowbell is blown faintly from over the hill, above which fleecy clouds are lazily drifting. Our dog is dashing madly

THE RICHER LIFE

about the stone wall on the fancied scent of a woodchuck. Our chickens are busying themselves about their manifold duties. Our Neighbour Jones is driving by to town, and is waving a salute with his whip. Our farmhouse nestles beneath its lofty elms, the picture of content. Oh, it pays to dream of it when the day's work is done, whether there be any substance to the dream or not. I don't believe there is one of us so steeped in the cares of middle age that we cannot break the chains if we will. *If we will* — that's the point. Most of us don't even think about doing it. We know that something is wrong with our lives, but we don't stop to study out what it is. But if we will only stop to consider, we shall see that it is possible to make our lives richer by training our minds to be more elastic

A BOY AND SANTA CLAUS

and our imaginations livelier. The desk-ridden man of fifty, whose joints are growing stiff and whose circulation is becoming defective, can renew his youth and limber up marvellously by a persistent application of the golf cure. He can do the same with his mind — if he will. For after all this is a life of illusions, only now we have substituted middle-aged illusions for those of childhood. Your idea of your own importance is an illusion. Your idea of the importance of your work is another. Your Monday morning blues are as much the result of illusion as was your Saturday morning ecstasy some thirty or forty years ago. Oh, those happy days of childhood, when we believed in Santa Claus! Let them come once more, once more! Let us relearn the art of playing. Let us relearn the art of

THE RICHER LIFE

imagining. Let us regain a little of the old simplicity.

We moved our household a little while ago, and as we overhauled our possessions we came upon many things that awakened memories. There were presents that we gave and received on Christmases gone by. There were humble gifts of the days when the pennies meant even more than they do now — gifts that meant sacrifice for love — gifts that fell far short of what we wished we could afford; they were the best we could do. I wonder what it was about those old Christmas presents that made the tears come. I fancy it was the awakened memory of a time when every thing meant so much and was so tremendously appreciated. And then and there we registered a prayer that we might never become so rich that Christmas

A BOY AND SANTA CLAUS

presents would no longer mean sacrifice. It is that simplicity of mind, that appreciativeness of the good that comes, that make us love "Mrs. Wiggs" and the "Five Little Peppers"; and if the day should ever come when that spirit has departed from our Christmases, it will be a sadder day, a thousand times, than the one on which I lost my Santa Claus.





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